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# *Arad Memorial Book*

The Jewish people of Arad



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# **The Jewish People of Arad Life and History**

**September 2000**

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# **The Jewish People of Arad Life and History**

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in memory of Baba and Ernő Kornis**

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Translated from the original Hungarian & Romanian by **Henry C. Tausk M.D.**

\* \* \*

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## **P r e f a c e**

At last the concept of crafting an enduring legacy, concerning the history of the Jews in Arad is getting realized. It was preceded by long years of cogitation and labor, expectations and disappointments. The noble thought emerged for the first time at a crowded gathering of immigrants from Arad living in Israel, back in the early sixties.

On that occasion, our late friend Mordechai Rössel, talked over the past. It was 250 years ago, when a handful of Jewish people settled in the historic city of Arad, on the shores of the River Maros. They did evolve into a large community, equally eminent in religious, educational and cultural activities.

Rössel, a popular publicist, concluded his poignant remarks as follows:

"We are the last generation witnessing the material and spiritual growth of that distinguished community. Its honored values beholden to civilization, were evident even during the tragic years of the Holocaust. Lamentably, in the end everything became a prey to the destructive communism. The beautiful memories riveted to our native city and the happy nostalgia of our fading youth must be reclaimed from the haze of oblivion".

These words had mobilized the audience. Those present on that occasion, offered spontaneously their far-ranging collaboration. The positive reverberations crystallized not only in supportive words, but in active cooperation too. Mordechai Rössel started to receive valuable historic texts, as well as numerous interesting illustrations. In his compulsive manner he toiled to compile and organize the precious documentation. It took years of hard work until it seemed that sufficient material had been gathered in order to start our tale. We felt that before starting to compose anything, we should consult the newspaper editor Dezsö Schön and Prof. Zwi Kaddari. At issue were some details concerning the general course of the memorial book. Mordechai Rössel had placed most of the material in a huge bag, and he set out one morning for that meeting. He had other errands too for his kibbutz Nir Etzion, and was carrying additional bags. Upon his arrival to the designated meeting place with his friends, he discovered that one of his bags was missing. Unfortunately it was the one with the priceless material concerning the history of Arad. His desperate efforts to locate the bag, through all possible channels, were in vain.

This excellent man, became almost depressed as a consequence of the loss. After a while he took heart and thought of starting again from scratch. We all tried to encourage him and sustain his confidence. Sadly, Rössel was no more the same man. Troubled by health problems he persisted in continuing both his kibbutz work and public activities. His heart was overstressed, he did

suffer an infarct and passed away soon after. With the tragic departure of Rösse, the idea of creating a memorial book became extinct.

The idea was resurrected in the minds of our friends on the occasion of the festivities commemorating the 50-th anniversary of the Jewish Lyceum of Arad (1991). Subsequent to the enormous success of the event we did realize that the prominent alumni of Arad are indelibly connected to the mutual past. Thomas Gordon and his congenial colleague Alfred Friedland, started to mobilize the participants of that gathering. The first meeting took place at the Gordon's home, and thus the hallowed organizational and editorial work was started. The present creation is the fruit of that activity. We offer it to everybody linked in a memorable way to the common past and our present existence.

\* \* \*

Akin to the melodious sounds of a harp plucked in the depths of the ocean, we can hear echoing the wonderful teachings of the great Arader mentors of the past. It looks as if we almost could catch a glimpse of the glittering immortal images of our pastors, through the mist of times bygone. They were the originators of the religious structures in our former community. Foremost is AARON CHORIN, who was instrumental in erecting the imposing synagogue. He created a renowned educational system, where irrelevant of their creed, consecutive generations received exemplary schooling. He introduced gratifying innovations in the liturgical service, increasing the appeal of religious life. By the same token he was careful to preserve the ancient holy traditions.

His worthy successor JAKAB STEINHARDT, was prominent amongst the contemporary spiritual leaders of Judaism, due to his theological erudition and cultural profile. He emerged as a representative of his colleagues, being a valued advisor to the minister of the emancipation, the baron József Eötvös.

Towards the end of the XIX-th century Dr.SÁNDOR ROSENBERG was active in promoting interdenominational cooperation. His untimely death lead to the elevation of Dr. LAJOS VÁGVÖLGYI as chief rabbi of the Jewish community. He was famous for his oratorical gifts, expanding his teachings with equal ease in the Hungarian, German and Rumanian languages.

The Jews of Arad participated in public life, well before the 1848 revolution. They were active in all aspects of cultural, artistic, journalistic, commercial and industrial endeavors. Amongst the many conspicuous personalities, the name of the financier ÁRMIN WALLFISH is preeminent. Due to his transposing skills, the masterworks of Hungarian language became accessible to the German speaking citizens. He was a continuing collaborator to the German press of neighboring Temesvár. Additionally he did translate into Hungarian the French narratives of Jules Janin. His father, the merchant PÁL

WALLFISH, was the outstanding president of the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in Arad, in addition to being a well-known and respected journalist. He was furthermore active in fostering musical projects.

Dr. SÁNDOR WEISZ was well known for his notable surgical career, being at the same time a master of the violin. His consort KLARA HERZFELD was an extremely popular piano performer.

The Jews were well represented in the ranks of the press too. The educator LEO JAJTELESZ popularized the ideas of the Hungarian national uprising in a German publication, the paper "Der Patriot". By the same token LIPOT ROSENBERG, the clerk-secretary of the Jewish community of Arad was chief redactor of the "Arader Zetitung". He too was promoting the spirit of the fight for the Hungarian freedom.

Dr. MIKSA ROSENBERG was one of the most prominent jurists of the legal profession. He represented the municipality in the dealings with the British Morgan Telephone Company. His associate Dr. LIPOT KELL, was highly esteemed even by the Rumanian authorities when they came into power after the war. Dr. MOZSI STEINHARDT, the grandson of the late chief rabbi, was a widely respected legal authority. His expertise was often solicited, whenever complex official transactions were implemented.

The Jewish financial experts had a significant role in revamping the banking system onto modern, European standards. Lack of space precludes mentioning them, but we must spotlight the name of LEOPOLD ZSIGMOND. He was also a talented musician who contributed to the flowering of musical life in Arad. His music-lover contemporaries gratefully enjoyed his initiatives. Due to his efforts, prominent artists like Jascha Heifetz, Huberman and countless others, gave recitals in the imposing Cultural Palace, built on the shores of the River Maros.

Last but not least, let us not forget the manufacturing business. The brethren NEUMANN were active sponsors and developers of industrial enterprises. The plant set up in 1843 to distill alcohol, became a major business venture, engendering a steam-mill and a yeast factory. A textile mill came up too, evolving into a major employer. The last head of the business complex was the young baron FERENC NEUMANN. His democratic spirit and his generous contributions to cultural and social causes inspired the respect and approval of the general public. The Jewish population of Romania is forever in his debt. His high-ranking connections contributed significantly to the saving of our community from the storm of annihilation. Documents surfacing at the end of the war revealed the part he played in averting the total evacuation of the Jews

of Arad. It was an astute and inconspicuous undertaking, done discretely, without much ado.

In the last lines of the introduction we evoke again the great spiritual leaders of the Arader Jews. Their names are imprinted with starry letters in the universal saga of the Jewish people. In the challenging moments of our fleeting existence, we are guided by the genius of their wisdom. We are taught to endure, trust, hope and keep the faith.

An ancient myth carried on sunlit vistas, enlightens us in the belief that the eagle never succumbs or vanishes. He is concealed for centuries in the gorges of the rocky mountains, emerging rejuvenated from his hiding. We sense that the ghosts of the past are likewise a presence in our life. We are imbued with the spirit of the prophet Isaiah: those who trust in God, have their strength renewed; they rise like an eagle; they stride without being worn down; they run without getting wearied.

Let us strive with renewed vigor and ardor toward the unknown and uncertain hereafter. Let us keep the faith in our spiritual legacy, with the unbridled hope of fulfilling a happier Jewish vision of the future.

## English Primer

For those who could read the Romanian edition of this book, certainly their own life experience came handy to complement the events described. Many English readers may fall in this category too. Yet those less versed in the intricacies of European past, a short primer may be all what is needed for a better understanding of this unique and extraordinary Jewish experience in the disappearing Diaspora, so well reflected in this book.

For starter one may wonder why on this Old Continent, where the Jews were deported 19 centuries earlier by the Roman Empire, their Arad history span less than four centuries, roughly paralleling the North American colonization. Both had a similar explanation: their location but has vastly different details. Arad is located on an open plain (see map) and after the Romans gave up Dacia in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century, it became again a getaway for nomad migration from Asia and North-East Europe. Sarmatians, Goths, Huns, Avars, and others followed, making settled life impossible. After the Slavic waves created some principalities, just as the Cumans and Pecenegi, yet another nomadic migration, that of Hungarians (Magyars) took place in the 9<sup>th</sup> century. They concentrated in the open Panonia (today Hungary) and secured their rear in Transylvania (today North Romania) only in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Then they built forts along the borderline, including one in Arad and placed Secuis and Saxon colonies with special privileges as border guards. But to cultivate the land the newcomers first needed to learn agriculture and if that was not enough, the Mongol-Tatar Golden-Horde under Batu-Khan appeared in 1241 to punish Hungary with a no-prisoner-taken approach. That ended the early Orod (or Urod) settlement (see chapter 1). Just a century later the new menace came in the form of the Ottoman Turks conquests of the Balkans, which by the 16<sup>th</sup> century overrun Arad. After the Habsburgs retook it in 1687, Jewish attempts to settle still had a formidable obstacle to overcome. Austro-Hungarian legislation forbade the Jews to possess and cultivate land, or enroll in the army, that is to be a peasant or soldier. Only long after the French revolution and the 1848 national revolutions, in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century did the Jews gained equal citizens rights. That some Jews managed nevertheless to settle in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Arad is a testament to their talent, perseverance and sufferings.

Another hazy issue may be what kind of population the Jews found themselves in Arad? Obviously Hungarians alone undertook the establishment of the first settlements and fort. The Tatar invasion thinned out the population in Transylvania and allowed some limited entries in Arad area of Vlachs, the

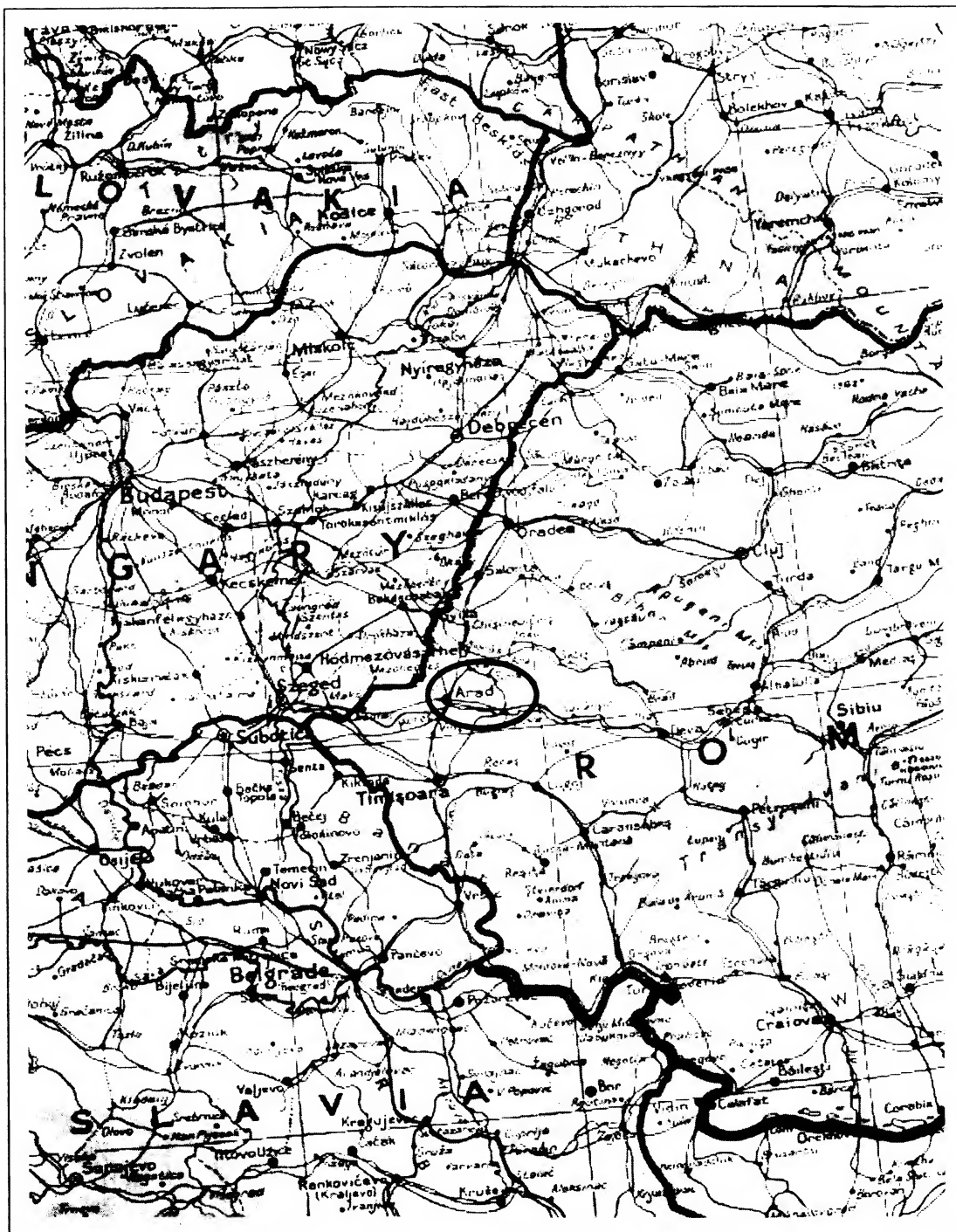
Roman speaking mountain people. It was nothing comparable to the Southern movement ("Descălecare" of 1290) when the Carpatian Vlachs were reinforced by the northern migration of the remnant population of the defunct Vlachic-Bulgarian kingdom, to establish the Romanian Principalities. More Romanian influx may occur during the Fanariot oppression, that of the Greek administrators in the service of the Turkish occupation of the Romanian Principalities and again after the Turkish retreat from Banat (1718), just South of Arad. Earlier the Hungarians settled the Cumans (Kun) in the countryside, and the Habsburgs the Swabs, a colony of whom was established in the suburb of "New Arad". Serbs emerged in Arad as mercenaries manning the fort and at outskirts Gypsies settled down in their migrating process from India across Europe. Most of these groups took up Hungarian as mother language and were assimilated in a mostly peaceful coexistence, unlike in Transylvania proper. The Romanians of Arad organized themselves as a separate cultural entity only at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and politically from the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, when it became instrumental in requesting the annexation of Arad to Romania. After 1921 the Romanian language was imposed overnight in schools and state administration, which was endowed with Romanian personnel. Arad was not included in the Northern Transylvania, ceded to Hungary under German pressure in 1940 (The dictate of Vienna, 30.8.1940), the Jewish community escaping the fate of their brethren just kilometers to the North, who ended in the gas chambers. This book describes lively the events around the Second World War. Note in addition, that Eichmann pressed hard to extract at least the Hungarian speaking Jews from Romania and baron F. Neumann of Arad played a yet untold generous and extraordinary role to prevent it.

Another question to ponder is the nature of the Jewish community that developed in Arad. Although most members originated from different points of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and German provinces, they brought with them different experiences. Those more fortunate to reside in less despotic islands of Jewish tolerance, went earlier on the path of enlightenment, as reflected in Moses Mendelssohn's (1729-86) and others writings, switched from Yiddish to literary German as mother language and pursued emancipation as much as allowed. On the other hand, those stranded on once welcoming Polish territory, later carved out among the Habsburgs, Prussia and Russia, found themselves under double oppression from Poles and their new masters, sinking in deep poverty and isolation. They gathered around their rabbis, who did their best to uphold them spiritually. The first group found a leader in Arad's chief rabbi Aaron Chorin, a pioneer of moderate reformation. First strongly resisted (see chapter 5), eventually Arad became the seed for the Neolog Judaism (officially the Congressionalist) spreading out over all the Hungarian Jewish communities.

Some conservative members around 1900 reestablished the Orthodoxy and were reinforced by later arrivals from Polish-Habsburg territories (see chapter 8) and opened its own synagogue. The two communities respected and supported each other, yet there was an invisible cultural divide. Neology had its perils, facilitating intermarriages and conversion yet prepared the community better toward the harsh realities during Holocaust and beyond.

Note that Transylvania was a fertile ground for reform. Early on the Saxons took up Lutheranism, the Székelys (Secui, Seklers) Unitarianism and most Hungarians Calvinism. Together with Catholicism, it was declared tolerance of religious practices (1556) at a time when Europe sank in religious wars. But they excluded the largest denomination, that of Romanian Orthodoxy. As in all Europe, counter-reform followed and the Catholic minority, mostly Hungarian nobility, advanced the Habsburg interests, versa the rest who supported local interest, introducing Jesuit repressions. That led to bloody rebellions. No wonder that the Jews of Arad faced hostility from feudal committees, as well as from competing professionals, whenever the population at large was more neutral, if not outright sympathetic to Jewish emancipation (see chapter 4). All that changed however with the advent of European fascism. The years after the war are detailed in chapter 11. Summing up the communist period, many Jews suffered in three waves: first for being proprietors of a kind or other, therefore “retrogrades”, second for being Zionist “sympathizers” and in the last period for simply being a minority. Confidential party instructions imposed the removal of all the minorities from any responsible position, down to the smallest companies, at a time when all the companies were state owned. Yet, everybody suffered under the harsh decrees of the Ceaușescu regime, eventually leading to an extraordinary popular revolt, a testimony to the courage and heroism of the Romanian people. By that time, however, the history of the Jewish presence in Arad came practically to its end.

Lets end with a footnote about the city of Arad. The most striking aspect is its straight and large boulevard, realized elsewhere only through modern city planning techniques. That was not the case in Arad. By the time the Turkish artillery made the fort obsolete, the city established its reputation on more worthy cause, becoming the focal point of regional trading. The market square was insufficient to allow all participants in. Horse driven carts coming from distant villages were aligned in multiple rows in long lines, with extra space for traffic and the barter was conducted with the merchandise still in carts. So the goods needed not to be unloaded and reloaded. The custom was kept right into the 19<sup>th</sup> century. When stores were built, the process changed and the straight and long area became available for a triple lane boulevard with enough space to plant trees and flowers and street-car lines in-between.



## **Chapter 1**

### **Arad – Reality and Nostalgia**

In this book we shall expand on almost 300 years of history, concerning the Jewish community of Arad. That congregation disappeared almost completely, nonetheless we have a considerable link to that Romanian city on the plains of the Tisza. Our strong bond is the remembrance of both the good and the bad times. Arad was the site of our adolescence, of our schooling, and for many of us the doorway into adult life.

Our memories are inseparable from the reality of that city, from its streets and buildings, the parks and the banks of the River Mureș with its waves cresting before the flooding.

The city of Arad, presently inhabited by well over 150 thousand people, is not a sudden and recent appearance (\*1). It has a protracted and turbulent past. In fact the location and configuration of Arad were altered by wars and destructive clashes. According to historians, the city archives went up in flames at least three times. Consequently, there is a dearth of documents concerning the past. Hence some historic data may be disputable. Even the name of the city, Orod in its archaic form is controversial: does it derive from an individual? Does it originate from Slavic, Daco-Romanian or Hungarian sources?

At any rate it is known that Orod, the primordial cast of Arad, existed some 1000 years ago, on the location of the present-day Glogovăț. By 1866 the ruins of the old church of Orod were still existing in Glogovăț (\*2). During the Middle Ages there was a well-known Catholic diocese of St.Martin's in Orod, headed by a ranking priest. It was a rich parish, incorporating amongst other villages Itelaca (known in later years as Old Micălaca), Șeiga (the borough going by the same name in present-day Arad), Șimand (where later the first Jewish settlers of the county established themselves in large numbers) and the small village where nowadays Arad itself is located (\*3).

The old ecclesiastical settlement of Orod was liquidated by the Turks. The residents, frightened by the conquering hordes, moved "3000 paces" to the setting of present-day Arad (\*4). Around 1520-1550, the erection of a new fortress on the site of the later "Serbian Quarter" was followed by a turbulent period of 150 years. The ownership of the stronghold alternated between the Turks and the Hungarian princes of Transylvania: most of the time it was in Turkish hands. There are indications that already by that time there were a number of affluent Jews of sephardic extraction living in Arad ( as well as in Lipova), ostensibly associated with the Turks (\*5).

In 1688 on directives from Eugène de Savoya, the Austrian general Karaffa removed the Turks from Lipova, Arad and its environs. The Peace of Carlovatz (1699) established the River Mures as a provisional boundary between the Austrian and Turkish domains. The old stronghold of Arad remained under Austrian rule, manned by Serbian soldiers. Outside the fortress in the area of the "Porta Hungariae" a new settlement was born, inhabited mostly by Germans and Hungarians. It became the "Piața Libertății" (Freedom Square), known later as Avram Iancu Plaza. One of the large brick buildings facing the square, was later converted into the Town Hall, to be torn down after 1850.

In the XVIII-th century the town proudly flaunted its title of "Königliche Stadt und Grenzfestung" (the meaning in contemporary language being: royal city and border stronghold). Recently Emil Anghel an architect in Arad, narrated in the columns of the local newspaper Adevărul, how the political and commercial center of the city evolved around the nucleus of the "Piața Libertății" (\*6).

We do remember with nostalgia the street (Meșianu) where the first manufacturing and commercial establishments came up, linking the "Libertății Square" with the "Catedralei Square". How often did we patronize that area for shopping or for other business. How often did we go to the Urania cinema - the first in the city and in the whole of Transylvania - located in the immediate neighborhood of the plaza. How often did we frequent the theater dominating the plaza, how many times did we enjoy the first-class performances of local or visiting actors! From the plaza we did amble on the Duca Street (called today Bălcescu) toward the Moise Nicoară Lyceum, on our way to the parks (in summer) or the skating rink (in winter). That road was also the access to the elegant bridge on the River Mureș - the Fortress Bridge - destroyed by the fleeing Hungarian troops on September 22, 1944. On that street, the house No. 16 was a beautiful home built by one of the famous rabbis of Arad - Alexander Rosenberg. A later owner was the Jewish proprietor of the Kerpel bookstore.

Our Jewish ancestors had settled first in the area of the "Old Fortress", called later the "Drăgășani" borough. The entrance used to be through a bridge leading to the "Old Commons" that was later known as the "Fish Square". In that area a handful of Jews were tolerated ( the first two families in 1717) when they were granted a permission to build their first houses. On the same location a hamlet of wooden houses came up, called the "Serbian Quarter" (Ráczfertály). The main street lead to the dwelling of the Serb captain called Tekilia (Thököli). The so-called "Turkish Fortress", where the Serbian guards were often truculent, was hindering the development of that area. A well-defined borough could arise only after 1765-74, when the fort was torn down. The Jews

did establish their first real synagogue in 1834, in a building that even today is the locale of the Jewish community's office. The former "Serbian Quarter" evolved later into the "Jewish Quarter", and a new large synagogue emerged there. It was erected by the orthodox affiliation, and was surrounded by other buildings serving the community, foremost the school established in 1832. By 1941 one of these buildings became the home of the freshly established Jewish Lyceum for boys and girls.

A number of us had spent their childhood in that quarter; where successive generations of our grandparents, parents and contemporaries lived and eked out their living in the unpretentious and humble buildings.

During the second half of the XIX-th century our Arad did change significantly. Further to the North, a new Neogothic building adorned with an imposing tower, became the home of the Town Hall, replacing the old town hall. The clock of the tower had only three faces originally, concealing the exact time from the military barracks. It was a kind of retaliation on part of the city government, initially piqued by the decision of the authorities to build the fort on the peninsula of the river loop, confronting the city proper.

In-between the "Piața Libertății" (Avram Iancu Square) and the new Town Hall a score of majestic edifices came up, matching in style. They became the future home of the County Offices, the Police, and the Financial Offices. A new, extremely wide street with ample sidewalks, the famous "Corso", appeared more than 100 years ago. It stretched from the Palace of the Minorites, housing the Catholic Cathedral, to the contemporary Horia Street. Would any of us be able to tally the mileage covered while walking up and down on that Corso during all those past years?

The political and cultural center rising in that area was a source of civic pride. There can be no doubt about the fact that the center of gravity had moved from the Piața Libertății towards the new Town Hall. The Neumann family, emerging from its humble beginnings, contributed significantly to the urban development of the area. This family received the nobility title of Baron from the Emperor Franz Josef of Austria. They started the first industrial buildup in Arad: a steam mill, a spirits and yeast factory, and finally a large textile plant (\*7). The Neumann de Végvár family initiated the building of a number of matching style edifices on the Main and Horia Streets, as well as on the commons leading to the parks on the shore of the River Mureș. The same Corso was dominated by a palace owned by Fischer Eliz. This was bequeathed in her last will to the Jewish community, with the purpose of establishing an orphanage for girls. The Corso of our youth may not evoke all the past days of yesteryear. We quote from the recollections of the well-known historian Ferenc Fejtő (\*8), who presently lives in Paris: "I did spend the summer holidays of

1916 in Arad... It may have been quite possible to have had encountered on the main street Franz Kafka (a writer of Jewish extraction, originally from Prague, E.n.) who writes in his diary, that during the same summer, he had spent some time with family in Arad".

Parallel to the Main Street, on the present-day Episcopiei Street, a building was to be erected, sheltering the home for the aged and the food kitchen. Further to the North on the Main Street, other large and fine buildings came up, one of them becoming in 1942-45 home to the Jewish Lyceum for boys and girls.

The green commons expanding in-between the Town Hall and the River Mureș, continues to be ground for public pride. It comprises the wide parks expanding from the Judicial Building to the new Park Hotel. At a central location there is the "Cultural Palace", a veritable architectural monument, accommodating a museum well known for its hoard of historic keepsakes, an important library, a prominent elementary school and a concert-hall. The famous Austrian tenor Leo Schlezak called it one of the best recital halls he ever performed in. (\*9). Opposite is the attractive building of the Commercial Lyceum for Boys, and in-between there is an open space filled with statuary, portraying the prominent literary men of Transylvania. The area includes the well-developed banks of the river with the beach (formerly Neptun), where thousands of Arader citizens (including ourselves) have spent part of their youth. After the major floods of 1970, the riverbank was recast in a two-tier mode, and the improved beach was moved onto the opposite shore of the river. That area of the river bank was the locale of the first nautical clubs and the earliest tennis courts ( the former Hellas club).

One cannot overemphasize the importance of this green area on the development of cultural life and sports in Arad. It accounts for the fact that even today, Arad is famous for spawning numerous painters, sculptors and other artists. This is valid for sportsmen too: swimmers, rowers, tennis players, table-tennis champions, etc.

Most of us probably have deeply rooted reminiscences concerning that area of the city: our school years at the Moise Nicoară Lyceum, the Commercial Lyceum, the Ghiba Birta Lyceum for Girls, and certainly the neighboring Jewish Lyceum. We must remember the youthful feeling of the times spent in the parks, on the green promenades, the beach and the river clubs. The later were the starting points for the long, sometimes dangerous swims in the Mureș. We should not forget, how we contemplated the past on the peninsula of the Fortress, exploring the fortified ramparts and visiting the site where the heroic leaders of the 1848 revolution were hanged.

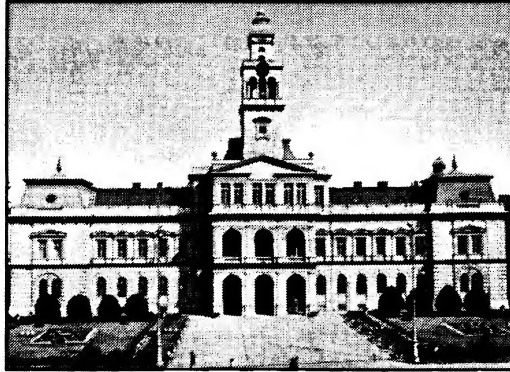
In due time the city expanded northward. The attractive Lutheran Church came up close to the Town Hall. Buildings that were originally peasant homes were gradually replaced with apartment houses, keeping in style with the rest of the city architecture. During the last decades the urban center of gravity moved farther north towards the Podgoriei Square. In our youth this was the starting point of frequent trips undertaken to the villages, hills and vineyards of the Arad Podgoria, as far as the "Căsoaia" rest house. We did use the electric tram, timeworn and almost unique of its kind. Recently beyond the station of that train, a new borough came up, extending as far as the former village of Micălaca.

From the main boulevard, the streets emerged not only toward the River Mureș, but in other directions too. One street, bearing the name of the Rumanian hero Crișan, runs to the modern market plaza of the city and the Municipal Hospital. From there the road leads to the Children's hospital and further on to the "Strungul" factory and the well-known Textile Mills of Arad. Nearby is the large Soccer Stadion, built in 1946 by the entrepreneur Neumann Francisc. The arena had witnessed many triumphs of the local team. The entrance to the Stadion is decorated with the statue of Josif Pecsofsky, renowned player of international rank. The City Woods and the lake where we used to skate in the winter are still there, but smaller in size than in the days of our youth. Nearby are a modern beach and an area of residential buildings and plants: noteworthy are the Astra Wagon Factory and the Tricotage Mills. Finally at the northern end of the boulevard is the Railroad Station, just as we knew it at the time of our adolescence. The craters created by the aerial bombardment of July 3, 1944, are long gone, and a new neighborhood of residential and commercial buildings came up. The puny tram line, scoffed at and ridiculed by us when it was started during the war years, evolved into a well organized public transportation system.

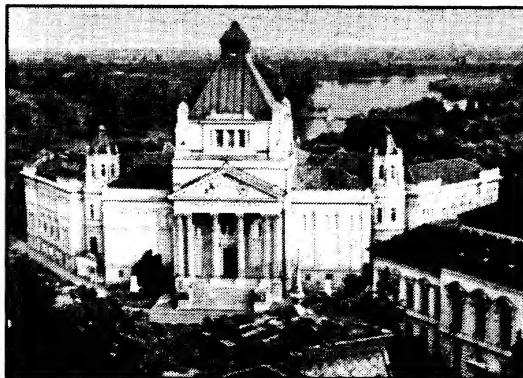
The city of Arad that unfolded during the centuries, may have been changed over the last decades, but its spirit is abiding. That "City on the Mureș" may have had its dark flashes, nonetheless our forefathers, our parents and even ourselves, we did enjoy moments of deep-felt satisfaction, empathy and harmonious coexistence.

To connect the past with the present is the goal of this book. It should portray the evolution of the Jewish community, born as far back as the beginning of the XVIII-th century. The good as well as the adverse should be evoked from that past, stretching to almost 300 years. Probing the yore in a clear and wistful fashion, should steer our steps on the path to the future, hopefully a better one for the next generations.

## The City of Arad



The City Hall



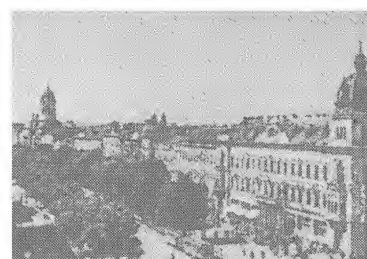
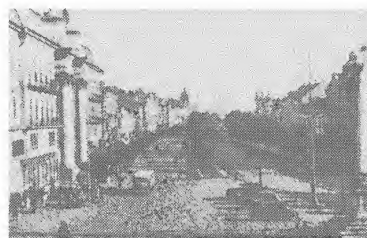
The Cultural Palace



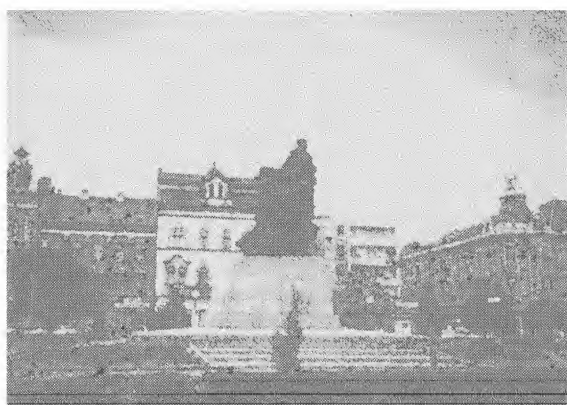
The Theater



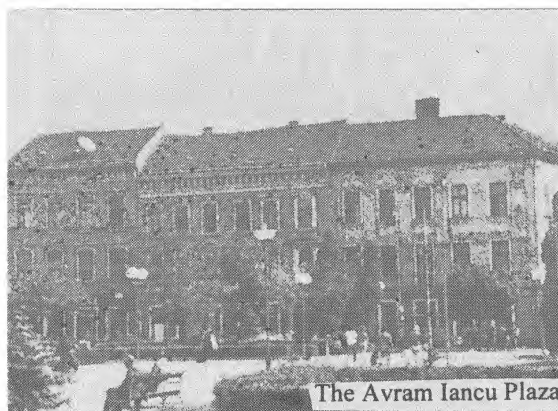
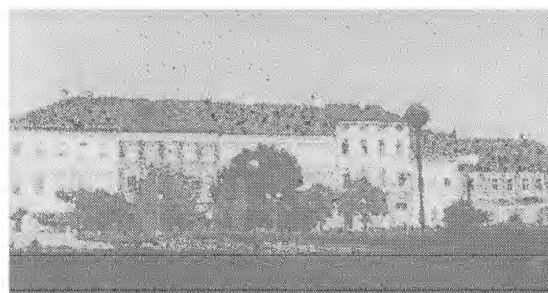
**The Roman Catholic Church**



**Views of the Corso**



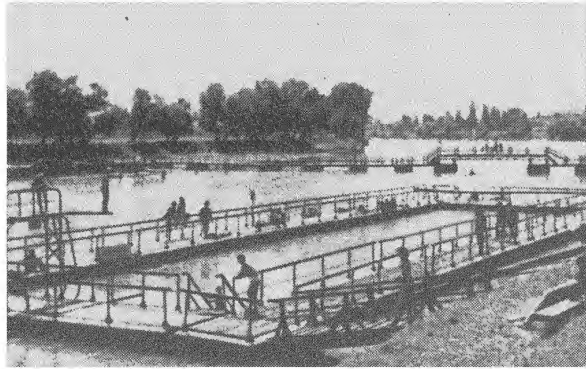
**The Avram Iancu Plaza**



**The Avram Iancu Plaza**



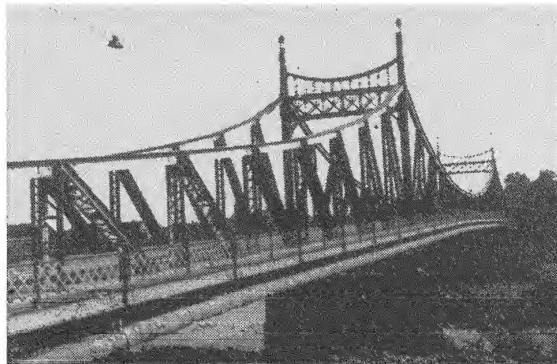
**The Simai Bath**



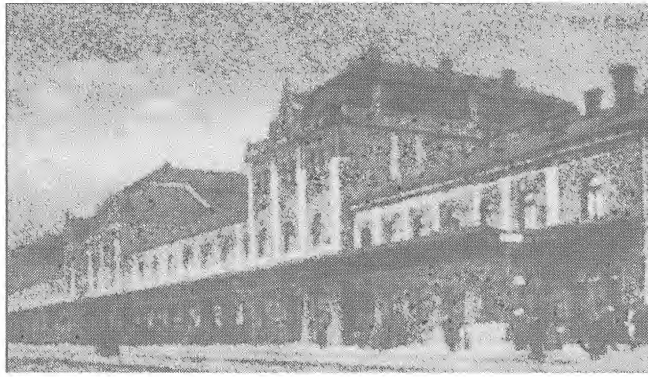
The old open-air bath  
on the Mureș



New buildings  
on the  
Revolution Boulevard



The Mureș bridge  
leading to New Arad



The Arad  
Railway Station



The Greek Orthodox  
Cathedral



View towards the  
River Mureș



## **Chapter 2**

### **Reflections on the Jewish Presence in the Arad Region**

The age-rusted wrought iron gate squeaks when I open it - I seem to be the lone listener to its wailing, almost human voice. I close it carefully and realize that it holds me captive, stuck forever. The pebbles clatter under my footsteps. The barking of a dog, conserved in the amber of memory, endures in my ear like an echo in the breeze. Progressing on the plank of the gravel path I skirt the bureau and office where Kronowith, the principal, tall and bald, is sitting forever at his desk, frozen with the passage of time. Advancing on the side of the small lodging of the Holzer's, the caretakers of the Jewish Elementary School, I enter the left wing of the squat building. The entrance door to the second class squeals likewise, the light penetrating through the window is blinding, it is a brilliance of triumphant intensity, melancholic and congruently painful. I sit down at the fourth desk in the right row. A miracle conjures up features and voices, I see beloved faces, I hear the names from Blum to Wittenberger, the recall animates this enchanted cluster of bees... We are children again, 42 of us, from the smallest, the eminent doctor George Messer my lifelong friend, to the tallest, a boy with a swarthy complexion called Adolf Feig. Perhaps Frédi Friedmann was the tallest, or possibly Jenö Fürst? I am not sure anymore. However I can hear the peerless mild voice of the teacher Miklos Luger: "Lean back children, place your hands to the back". Dutifully I lean back, I flex my arms, the staid flow of the Mures swells beyond me, breaking its girdle of ice. Ice floes, conveyors of remembrances, rotate and move around, hurtling in the conduit. They ascend on the crest of the waves, sinking in the whirls and rising on the surface again like boats. "How many will survive the wind and the waves from the host of the masts leaving the shores?". How many of those 42 masts of the second class did sink? Where about on the globe of the earth, did the merciless waves disperse us? Why am I flooded by tears on that evening when I think of our common past "Ma nishtana", I have to sit leaning back "Kulanu mesubim", willed by Uncle Luger in those "Mikol haleilot".

I behold him in front of me, not too tall, a solid shape, firm like a rock. When I slip my hand into his west-pocket to extract the promised tale, I sense every thread of the gray suit, every fiber of the heart - it is the story of Jewish life, the beginning of the communities in Arad. I feel the scorching of two pairs of eyes looking at me, probing and wooing me to account for my life. The incomparably gentle blue eyes of my teacher Miklos Luger, and the amazingly penetrating black eyes of Rudy Korzienovski, my former desk-mate, a Polish

refugee, by than already a fiery champion of Jewishness. It is the voice of Uncle Luger which starts the first narrative, sore and reeking of blood like all our tales. Listen to it reader...

Whenever I peruse the record of any Jewish community (I recall the first such book in 10 volumes by Simon Dubnov, which I did read in the Romanian language, at the age of 16 years) I expect to see the same pattern. Ahashverosh, the wandering Jew, comes forth from nowhere; first he emerges as a small trader, a payer of levies. The Jew is a purveyor of small trade, enduring under the protection of a local potentate. The idea of a future community arises the moment a second Jew emerges. Both of them will establish a family, will have children. They will build homes and expand their business. Gradually, despite the wearying taxation, the small island of a Jewish community is borne, it expands in all directions like an organism with growing strength. It will reach out to other Jews in neighboring communities. Common achievements are pursued, obviously first the economic issues, followed by religious and cultural actions. All of the above is noticed by those who are averse to the prospering of Jews. Intrigues are woven, hatred is kindled, pogroms and banishments are organized, always the same arguments and insinuations, the same conduct. The Jewish homes are demolished, the community is ravaged. Jews are either butchered or expelled (it may be considered the less atrocious alternative). Those cemeteries that eluded destruction may persist; likewise the ruins of synagogues with their quaint writings, witnesses to past times. The people of the settlements do remember - either with hate or with nostalgia - that Jews used to live there. Those sentient or interested do remember the Jews, even if they passed away a long time ago. The question arises: how does one assume somebody is a Jew, who is to be considered one? Until the start of this century, a Jew was somebody who practiced the religion of Moses, and was registered as such in the census. One automatically ceased to be Jewish by repudiating the religion, be it by baptism, or by adhering to a Christian denomination. Race was officially no hindrance, albeit the tangible and spiritual separation of Jew in the ghettos was surmised and practiced. All kinds of restrictions were imposed, foremost against wedding a Christian spouse, furthermore against practicing a profession other than commerce (restricted to a few options) or against settling in localities other than authorized. Even the wearing of distinct clothing or other symbols connected to the "status of being a Jew" persisted stubbornly up to the start of the delayed emancipation during the middle of the XIX-th century. For us Jews, the Middle Ages, fraught with prejudices, limitations, restrictions and gruesome customs, prevailed well into the modern times. In that field, there was only a faint and much delayed echo of the concepts of enlightenment.

## **Chapter 3**

### **The Start of the Jewish Presence in Arad**

An attempt to narrate the history of our ancestors in that location is fraught with uncertainty. First, we should try to define in time and space what was ( and still is today) regarded to be the range of Arad. Up to the onset of the First World War, historians deemed to delineate the "District of Arad" as the territory to the north of the River Mureș as far as the present western frontier of Romania (expanding towards the Hungarian Cenad), stretching to Zam-Hunedoara and the valley of the White Crișul as far as Hălmagiu.

The Turks were routed in 1689 in front of Vienna, and their retreat was followed by the expansion of the Habsburg monarchy into the area north and even somewhat south of the River Mureș. The Banat continued to stay for a while under Turkish rule. Consequently, the River Mureș (from Lipova to Arad), became primarily an administrative frontier, but also a conveyer of commercial and spiritual trading. It was connecting two worlds that were at significantly different stages of evolution and civilization. Concomitantly it was a highly permeable demarcation line and an avenue of confrontation between the two powers. In that intriguing domain of transition (from all aspects of ethnography, sociography and history), the Jews were eminently destined to evolve into a kind of middlemen. They did not belong to either side and they were able to move around in both orbits. It is beyond doubt that the above mentioned conditions were determinant in the slow and unfettered emancipation. This ushered in the creation of the Jewish communities, with socio-cultural institutions encompassing not only the synagogues and cemeteries, but all other Jewish communal associations.

It is believed that Jews were present in the area from the beginning of known history. There are clues that in the Middle Ages, Jews were active in the trade with salt and other merchandise, using the river route of the Mureș (\*10). More to the point are the indications of a Jewish presence in Ineu and Lipova, concomitant with the start of the Turkish penetration (XVI-XVII centuries). These were mostly sephardic (originating from Spain) Jews (\*11). The presence of Jews in Timișoara is confirmed by the existence of a tombstone dating from 1636 (\*12). There is also documentation on the extermination of the Jews (concurrently with the Turks), on the occasion of the onslaught on the fortress Lipova by the Austrian armies, commanded by the general Karaffa.

The XVIII-th century signaled the end of the Turkish period for the city and province of Arad (it lasted with short reprieves from 1551 to 1689), and the

start of the Austrian Imperial rule. During the "Turkish" period one can infer the existence of sephardic Jews from documents (especially concerning the settlement of Lipova). Conversely during the "Austrian" period, there is definite official documentation of Jews settling in Arad and some of the surrounding villages.

In the XVIII-th century Arad became part of a Habsburgic Austrian Empire, which expanded over most of the present day Central European nations: Austria, Hungary, Czechia, Slovakia, Croatia, Slovenia, Northern Italy, parts of Germany, Poland and parts of present-day Romania: Bucovina (since 1772), Transylvania, the Banat and temporarily even Oltenia. The realm expanded significantly after the Turkish-Austrian wars, and the Austrian Empire became one of the major powers in Europe. However, the structure of the empire was quite uneven. The newly conquered areas were underdeveloped and had feudal frameworks, akin to the Middle Ages. There was a constant tug of war between the central Viennese bureaucracy and the local aristocracy that ruled the counties (in Arad they were mostly the Hungarians) with regard to the administration. The cities of the East and the Southeast of the Empire emerged from the wars partially or totally devastated. They had no proper autonomy and were generally subordinated to imperial management. Inside the cities proper there was a strict separation between the noblemen, the craftsmen who were mandatorily organized into guilds, and the few tradesmen incorporated into their professional associations. Furthermore there were the property owners versus the real paupers, the later without the rights to permanent habitation. On the lowest rung of the social structure were the Jews, who like in most European countries were at best tolerated, unless they were financiers or well-to do and protected people.

All over the Austrian empire ruled by the Habsburg emperors related to the Spanish monarchs, the prevailing anti-Judaic policy, influenced by the Catholic Church and its monastic orders, was typical of Medieval times. It comprised limitations or complete interdiction on settling in cities, limiting the rights to matrimony and establishing a family, a ban on practicing most professions, and discriminatory fiscal legislation that resulted in manifest poverty (\*13).

The Jewish population of the Empire was not to forget how the Emperor Leopold I did exile the Jews from Vienna and from the whole of Lower Austria in 1670, as well as the drastic reduction of their number in the following decades (\*14). During the rules of the Emperors Joseph and even more Carl VI (1711-1740), these anti-Jewish injunctions were expanded. The number of "conscriptions" (census with the purpose to limit the number of Jews) increased,

the taxes were raised and amplified, and the importance of the "protection" levy was enhanced in addition to the "tolerance" assessment (augmented per se).

Otto Lakatos, former Catholic priest and superior of the local Minorite order, authored the book "The History of Arad"; herein he describes the situation in Arad during the first half of the XVIII-th century. In that period a small number of Jews made their appearance in Arad and the surroundings. The Banat, south of the Mureş, continued to be under Turkish domination, and as such an unsettled situation, typical for a frontier zone, prevailed for a number of years after 1700 in the city. In Arad proper, the fortress and the area surrounding it, were dominated by the mostly Serbian border-guards (grăniceri), to the extent that it was called the "Serbian Hamlet". The local residents, as well as the neighbors from the "German" or "Imperial" boroughs were subjected to the often violently abusive comportment of the border-guards.

The Jews who were practically devoid of civil rights in the whole of the Austrian Empire, started to settle during those troubled times in the villages around Arad, and concomitantly in the city proper. The figures in the census data of the Jews in the Arad County in 1767 are significant. The number of Jewish heads of family (17), is identical in the village of Şimand with that one in the city of Arad, while the number of members in Jewish households is larger in Şimand (59) as compared to Arad (57), (\*15).

In a text compiled in 1860 by Leopold Rosenberg, clerk-secretary of the Jewish Community, there are details on the establishment and slow development of the Jewish populace. The data are based on contemporary documents. (\*16). The first text quoted is a "**letter of protection**" given by the general Field Marshall (lieutenant general) baron Stefan Cosa, dated from May 1, 1717. In that letter, baron Stefan Cosa, the commanding officer of the fortress Arad and the territory of the Mureş, grants permission to the first two Jews to establish themselves and live rightfully in the city of Arad. The following is the text of the letter (in translation from German): "We hereby notify, that the Jew Isaac Elias, together with his whole family (including his children and grandchildren) and the Jew Marcus Mayr, residents of the city, are under my shield and protection, on condition that without my permission they shall not put up in their households others than the above mentioned... Full freedom of movement as well as exercising their trade must be granted to the Jew Isaac Elias and his family, and to the Jew Marcus Mayr. Anybody having a grievance against the above mentioned Jews, will submit it to me" (\*17).

In those writings of L. Rosenberg, a Jew is mentioned by the name of Mandel (later registered as Mandel Wrangler, the ancestor of the Winkler family) who emerges in the 1741 census as being under the protection of the Imperial border-guard officers Horváth and Turcovic (18). During the

following years the number of Jews is somewhat growing, but one has to be aware of the fact that not all the Jews registered for the census. They always feared that consequent to imperial edicts, they may be restricted in getting married and establishing a household. (In the above mentioned book by Otto Lakatos, page 80, paragraph 3, it is stated that in the city registers there always have been more Jews, than in the census). At any rate in 1743, the Arad County Council, confirmed that there are 6 Jews in Arad, 4 of them property owners (among them the above mentioned Elias and Winkler families, Ferenc Marcus - ancestor of the Köppich family, Herschel Goldschmidt - ancestor of the Herz family, and Jacob Löbl - ancestor of the Tenner family). The census carried out in 1754 shows the presence of 24 Jewish families (amongst them Abraham Jacob - ancestor of the Kraus family), 7 of them being property owners (\*19).

Up to the end of the XVIII-th century, the number of Jews in Arad remained relatively low, mainly due to the fact that the fate of Jews did not improve under Maria Theresa, daughter of Carl VI, when she became Empress in 1740. It is not coincidental that the famous Jewish historian Simon Dubnov gave the title: "The terrible caprices of the Empress Maria Theresa" to a chapter in his opus (\*20). He is reviewing the renewed persecutions of the Jews in the entire Austrian Empire, climaxing in the Imperial edict of 1745 concerning the expulsion of the Jews from Prague and the whole province of Bohemia. In some areas ordinances were renewed, which obliged the Jews to wear distinctive symbols like the yellow patch, the full beard for married men, etc. (\*21).

The situation of the Jews in Arad was influenced by the extremely adverse political standing of the officials, as well as by the arbitrary measures taken by the local authorities. In 1702 an imperial emissary proclaimed the ordinances regarding the freedoms of the people of Arad (Freiheitspunkte), granting latitude for everybody to settle in the city. These were for sure inapplicable to the Jews, who in order to settle were required to obtain letters of protection from civilian or military authorities. Even so in the first 40-50 years, whenever the Jews in Arad managed to settle, they were excluded from any creative activity, except the producing and selling of spirits. As such in the 1745 census, Mandel Winkler is the only one with a mention of a profession: it is remarked that he owns 3 distillery vats for brandy, his only means of livelihood being the production of spirits (\*22).

The Jews of Arad encountered difficulties when they wanted to expand their trade beyond the spirits. Proof of this is evident in the petition forwarded to the Royal Hungarian Lord Lieutenancy Council in Bratislava on March 14, 1740, where they write: "During the past 70 years, our forefathers, as well as ourselves, we did endeavor in the Cameral Settlement of Arad to earn a living and accumulate some assets. We are subject to levies consequent to our trade (a

description follows enumerating the taxes imposed by different authorities, amounting to 290 florins a year). Presently our incomes and earnings from distilling brandy are restricted, and as such we will not be able to assure our daily sustenance if the honorable county... will not make it possible for us to expand our trade (from spirits alone) to other merchandise like cloth, utensils and other important products" (\*23). One has to bear in mind, that the efforts of the Jews to expand their trade to merchandise other than brandies, was systematically blocked by the Association of the Merchants of Arad, created in 1738. Their initial statute provided that only those of Christian faith may be accepted as members, be it Catholics or Greek-Orthodox (\*24).

The attempts of the Jews of Arad to expand into manufacturing were repudiated due to the fact that one had to belong to a guild. These assemblies were organized either on the principle of religious adherence (Catholic or Greek-Orthodox), or rarely, based on nationality (Hungarian or German). These organizations were always extremely conservative, they fiercely resisted not only the acceptance of the Jews in the guild, but even opposed the teaching of different trades to the Jewish apprentices.

The Jews encountered numerous difficulties even while exercising the only profession allowed for many decades (the distilling and marketing of spirits), due to chicanery and restrictions. There were instances when the local authorities prohibited the selling of brandies at the fairs. In 1765, the county authorities drastically limited the amounts of spirits to be distilled within the county. The following document from the previously mentioned work published by Otto Lakatos is also noteworthy. It contains a complaint of the Jews of Arad to the County authorities, against the Minorite Order, dated May 9, 1754 (translation from the Hungarian): "Honorable Noble County! Our Benevolent Rulers! We would like to put forth our complaint. We, the Jews, residents of Arad, we observed and observe according to the rules, all the Holidays - Easter, Christmas, Whitsun and Sundays, and on all of these days we do not distill brandy. Presently we are requested to observe additional holidays. We have to submit this to the Honorable County Authorities, because if we will be subjected to comply with the additional holidays, it will become impossible for us to make a living, and we are anyway struggling with poverty. Therefore, we plead for the help of the Honorable County, to intercede with the pious Minorite Fathers, and ask them not to force us to honor all the holidays. Hoping to continue to be under the protection of the Honorable County, we make obeisance as your humble and poor servants" (\*25).

The Jews were driven to destitution by the combined fiscal demands of the central imperial organs, the imperial domain, the county administration and the city government. From a petition of the Jewish Community forwarded in

1770 (\*26), it becomes evident that the Jews had to pay 110 florins as a levy of tolerance, 120 florins for the Imperial Chamber and 60 florins tax to the County of Arad (the later amount was called the protection levy). Since 1751, the Jews were obliged to pay an additional tax to the city administration. Seemingly these assessments were not satisfactory, because the city imposed extra taxes on the usage of some ad-hoc workshops installed in the embankment surrounding the settlement. Furthermore a special additional tax was imposed on every vat used for brandy distillation (\*27).

Proof of the difficulties created by these assessments is the fact that the annual income of the above mentioned Mandel Wingler was appraised at 400 florins, and over 50% of this revenue went for levies (\*28). For those Jews who had lower incomes, those burdensome taxes made the living almost unendurable.

The Jews of Arad, subjected to countless abuses, had to supplicate repeatedly the higher authorities in Bratislava or even Vienna. Most of these conflicts were solved only with the normalization of the civic status of the Jews, coincidental with the adjudication of Arad as a Free Imperial City in 1834.

## **Chapter 4**

### **The Jewish Community of Arad; Socioeconomic and Religious Aspects Before 1848**

Throughout that long and stormy period there was a surge in the unfolding of society in Imperial Austria, favoring the progress of Jewish communities, as well as a more democratic attitude towards them. The humanitarian and liberal ideas generated by the French Revolution in 1791, included legislation proclaiming the emancipation of the Jews. These concepts penetrated gradually into the awareness of the public, leading to a change in the ghetto mentality, perpetuated hitherto by the nobility and the conservative elements.

The development of the township of Arad evolved parallel with the agrarian improvement of the area. Gradually Arad became the main marketing base of the agricultural production. Grains were cultivated intensively both on privately owned and rented estates. The growth in the raising of industrial crops (flax, hemp, rape, tobacco) was concurrent with grain farming. Manufacturing and guilds were multiplying and trade was developing. During the period from 1787 to 1850, the population of Arad grew from 7985 to 22398 residents (\*29). Concomitantly the Jewish population increased from 352 to 3418. The steepest growth occurred in 1829-38, resulting in the doubling of the tally. The percentage of the Jewish population in the general community increased from 0.23% to 1.36%. Local statistics within the county from the year 1820, reveal that 54% of the Jews lived in Arad and 36% in Șimand. The fact that the majority of the Jews (90%) were living in cities, substantiates the intensity of the urbanization.. The growth was brought forth mainly by the high birthrate (the so-called birth-coefficient among Jews was 18.43%) \*(30), and a longer life-span. The later was due to the stringent sanitary conditions imposed by the Judaic rituals. Statistics reveal that half of the Jews were young, 35% were between the ages of 15 and 45. Many of the Jews were unmarried, in part because of their young age, but also because the official ban on mixed marriages (\*31). The growth in the number of Jews was further propelled by waves of immigration. The expulsion of the Jews from Vienna (1672) induced the first wave, followed by similar ones from the German provinces, amongst them Moravia. The third one ensued after the foray of the Habsburg Empire into Galitzia. The relocation of the Galitzian Jews to Hungary started in 1780, and continued for the duration of 4 decades, slowing down after 1830. Immigration permits were issued either against cash payment, or subject to personal connections, often at the whim of the officials. The number of Jewish

residents was controlled by the townships (\*32). The documents of free passage ("laisser-passer") were rather expensive and were issued by the municipality where the Jews were registered. As of 1790, the Jews had to reply in writing to numerous questions concerning their previous domiciles, means of existence, fiscal contributions (taxes and levies) and tangible resources. The large questionnaires included all of the above. Every head of a Jewish family was summoned before a "bar of adjudication". In fact the residential permit was issued by the Lieutnancy Council and not by the local administrative organs (\*33). As a general rule, obtaining the immigration license was mostly a question of paying the price, without encountering undue difficulties. There were no expulsions, but the conscriptions proliferated, and their purpose was to impede the settlement of the Jews (\*34). After 1820 immigration was entirely banned, nevertheless it did continue illegally, encouraged by some local landowners who were interested in the development of business. The number of Jews lacking proper documentation, who gradually infiltrated into the area of Arad, did grow constantly. It is worth mentioning that as late as 1831/32 the Moravian local authorities were looking for the rabbi Aaron Chorin, who was born in Moravia. They did ask for the unpaid "exit levy", despite the fact that he had left Moravia as far back as 1789 (\*35).

In 1834 the statute of "Free Royal City" was conferred on Arad, and it became an impediment to the immigration. The city, released from the jurisdiction of the County, was managed by a council composed of the local notables of commerce and industry. Their competitive disposition induced a curtailment of the immigration. At the same time, the Jews who settled after 1823 in the city or the area, were risking expulsion. Paradoxically this was induced by the initiative of the Jewish community to erect a new synagogue. The City Council delegated an official commission chaired by the royal councilman Sabbas Thököli, who ordered a new census in 1821. In planning the size of the synagogue, they had to determine the number of property owners. The first census of Jews in Arad on March 17, 1822, (\*36), established three categories, each with further subdivisions, according to the date of their settlement in Arad (\*37). The first contingent, those who had settled "long time ago", comprised about half of the Israelites, about 350 to 380. The second group of 190 Jews did settle after 1794. This group was further subdivided into 3 categories: a/. those who did settle legally (a total of 10 families), b/. those who had no valid documents but are leading a honest life and are not undesirables, and finally c/. those "who ought to be returned", based on a decree from 1806. About 180 Jews became part of the third group lacking official documentation and deemed undesirables.

In 1823 the General Assembly of the County approved the propositions of the commission (\*38). The Jewish community of Arad put forth a petition

(\*39), asking for a postponement of the decision. The City Council, of staunchly anti-Semitic bearings, insisted on the ousters (\*40) and decided to remove all Jews of the third group, and even those from the second category excepting only the house-owners (\*41). A number of changes were effected, following the implementation of the decision. There are no precise figures on how many Jews were expelled, but the census of the years between 1820 and 1829, indicates a decrease of one third in their number, a total of 402 registrants. The real figure must have been larger, because many have left Arad in a hurry before the expulsion; on the other hand the large number of childbirths was not included in the calculation. It is to be noted that in Şimand the decree of removal was not implemented because of the interests of the local landowner. The immigration resumed at a slow pace after 1830 (\*42). The Jewish business activities changed in concert with the unfolding of society. The Jews adjusted rapidly to the modern ways of trading commodities (\*43). The commerce in grains, tobacco, wool, livestock, agro-silvical products and artificial fertilizers, as well as that in industrial products was done through Jewish middlemen (\*44). The trade expanded in both the internal and external market, the later one being represented by the different provinces of the Austrian Empire. A conspicuous example is the Deutsch family; they did arrive to Arad before 1800, coming from Kőszeg, Hungary. The father Avram, started commerce with grains, and the son Ignac (Eisik) amplified this business. Bernat, in the next generation, continued to expand the assets of the family, moving the site of the activity and the gravitational center to Pest. In 1838 Eisik Deutsch became the agent in Arad of the insurance company "Assicurazioni Generali" from Trieste ( 70 years later the writer Franz Kafka will be employed as procurist by the company), and in 1844 he is listed on the board of directors of the first bank in Arad (\*45).

The Wodianer house was dealing in grain products and tobacco. The Schossberger's were involved in similar activities. The authorities imposed numerous limitations on businessmen trading with old clothing (woolens), old furniture, as well as on itinerant merchants (\*46). A large number of pub-owners in Arad and its surrounding were Jewish. Even the tavern of the Hodos-Bodrog monastery was leased to a Jew (\*47). In 1827 the Jews were prohibited from running a tavern and selling wine. An appeal from the Jewish body was rebutted. The County Committee finally overrode that decision of the City Council, but the jeopardy persisted. (\*48). The Jewish community was involved in a never ending fight to protect the small, itinerant Jewish merchants, in order to secure for them a minimum of livelihood. After the year 1816, Jews were banned from selling their goods in the stalls of the main market of the city center. This was authorized only during the annual fairs, and it was restricted to owners of stores. Merely by the year 1824 were Jews allowed to set up their

stalls in the "Bishop Street" (stretching today between the Avram Jancu Plaza and the Fortress Bridge), and likewise only the store-owners (\*49). After 1834, their tents were to be removed to the adjacent streets, the stalls had to bear the inscription "Israelite Religion" and the merchants had to obtain a "Certificate of Morals" from the City Hall (\*50). There are known cases when Jewish owners of a business (for example one Jonas Robitschek), were denounced on fictional grounds, forcing them to close their stores (\*51). In the field of agriculture, it was decreed in 1818 that no estate can be leased to Jews. Later the so-called "royal dominions" were excepted from this rule. In 1819 a decree requiring the abrogation of all leases to Jews was put forward. In the end this course was not implemented. On the verge of the 1848 revolution, the owners of the great domains continued to lease their estates to the Jews. The social and economic development of the Jews favored the departure from the primitive "pushcart" commerce, and created the orientation towards the pursuit of a profession. The exercising of a craft became possible due to a decree in 1806. Jewish workshops could employ only Jewish helpers and apprentices. In 1840 another decree made it possible to the Jews in Arad to exercise any craft.

The rabbi Aaron Chorin and his retinue strove to induce the notables of the community to help the craftsmen. They created an association to propagate the workshops and give financial assistance to those who wanted to establish themselves on their own. By 1842 this association had 207 contributing members, with a capital of 6000 forints and a yearly income of 1900 forints. Out of this 1600 forints were spent on assisting those workmen who had opened their own shops. Preferred trades were tailoring and leather-tanning. The guilds (who had no Jewish members), created most of the difficulties: the training of Jewish apprentices was hindered, as well as the employment of assistants and no Jews were admitted as members. There were numerous arguments with the Lieutenancy Council and with the leadership of the guilds. Jews were busy in other crafts too: jeweler, compactor, carter, dyer. A roster of the Jewish artisans (\*52) lists a total of 21 trades practiced by the Jews in Arad in the year 1848. A total of 104 "active" individuals practiced crafts in 1848. From this figure one can infer that a total of 470 individuals (57% of the urban Jewish population) were supporting themselves by artisanat (\*53). Examples of manufacturing from that period are: leather-tanning (Jacob Winkler 1838), cloth making (Laurențiu Klein 1847), distillation of alcohol (David Mittelman 1838), distillation of liquor (Moritz Pollák). In Șimand intensive agriculture was practiced. A bank established in 1840, the "Savings House" (under the management of Markovics, the brothers Landshut, Hirschl), was incorporated in 1845 (\*54).

Starting with 1800, there was an emergence and development of a "lay" intellectual class. By 1848, 17 intellectuals were recorded, amongst them 10

physicians. The best known Jewish physician was Hermann Kohn, a graduate of the surgical school of Cluj. The first female professional was a midwife, Rozalia Kohn (\*55).

Fiscal problems were always in the forefront of the troubles. Taxes paid to the city hall for the use of the common elements (like grazing), as well as levies on housing, grew exorbitantly. Starting in 1832 taxes were levied on the synagogue and on the school, retroactive as far back as 1830 (\*56). Alternately the "tolerance fees" were abrogated, but instead, the Jews were required to pay the amount of 18000 florins as "compensation". The Jewish community suffered greatly from the wide variety of assessment. For instance even the outfitting of the imperial cavalry had to be paid in part by the Jews. According to a decree from 1807, the Jews had to contribute to the annual recruiting ( 2 recruits for Arad) (\*57). With the approach of the 1848 revolution, the socioeconomic consolidation of the Israelite population was multifaceted: there were no more forcible conversions of newborns, one could keep the proper holidays, one could work on legal holidays, there were no restrictions on owning a house. Legislation allowing Jews to buy a house was promulgated only as late as 1842 (\*58), while the permission for establishing a "kosher" butchery was granted in 1830 (\*59). Finally the problem of Jewish emancipation came up specifically during the Diet of Budapest in 1839-40, and was the subject of discussion. Subsequently the restrictions on housing as well as on the trade and crafts were rescinded. On May 22, 1843, the Diet discussed the issue of granting citizenship to the Jews (\*60). In 1844 the scientist Gábor Fábian elaborated in the press on his proposals to extend citizenship to the Jews, and asked for legislation allowing for marriages between Jews and Christians (\*51). The matter was to be solved (partially) in 1848. As far back as 1780, Hungarian became the official language in Arad. In 1810 the Jewish community decided that for matters of protocol, the use of the German language should be replaced with the Hungarian one. Since 1830 there was a constant upsurge in the magyarization of the Jewish community. The rabbi Chorin could not yet accept the Hungarian language in the framework of the religious services. His successor, rabbi Steinhardt, delivered the first Hungarian language sermon in 1845 (after the death of rabbi Chorin).



## Chapter 5

### **Rabbis, Prominent Personalities and Community Institutions during the XVIII to XX-th Centuries**

As pointed out in the previous chapters, the onset of the Jewish community in the township of Arad may be linked to the dawn of the XVIII-th century. In Lipova there existed a community as far back as the XVII-th century. Matching these two hubs, Jewish settlements were consolidating in Curtici, Nădlac and Șimand, the latter being the most important>(\*62). The name of the merchant Isac Elias, has been previously mentioned as one of the two Jews officially settled in Arad. He likewise has been the founder of the Jewish community, brought forth about the year 1742 (\*63), (we could not establish the proper date). A letter, where the Jews of Arad are vindicating their interests (probably for the first time in an official manner) was presented to the Lieutnancy Council in Bratislava and is dated March 14, 1740 (\*64). The association asked the authorities for fiscal leniency on behalf of the Jews (\*65). Further there is a document mentioning a donation of a tract of real estate to the community, by a woman named Nehama, and the construction of the first wooden synagogue on this land in 1759 (\*66). The first rabbi of the community was Jochanan, and the first service was celebrated in 1764.

During the first years of the acceptance of a number of Jewish settlers in Arad (1717), the first Jewish society to be established was the Hevra Kadisha. In 1729, Isac Elias was one of the first men to be registered therein. In those days the Hevra Kadisha managed not only the burials of the Jews and the upkeep of the cemeteries, but as far as it was feasible, also tried to assure some form of medical care to the Jews of Arad. The oldest ordinance of the Hevra Kadisha dating from 1750 (\*67), safeguarded in the original form in the archives, alluded to even older statutes. As it was previously mentioned, the oldest tombstones in the Jewish cemetery of Arad are dated from the end of the XVII-th century. It is of interest that the Hevra Kadisha as an institution, predates even the Community.

The rabbis following Jochanan were Broda LéB (1770-1786), succeeded by Stemnitz Hirsch (1786-1789). The first assembly of religious studies is dated from 1785.

The community of the Jews in Arad was organized along the chamber system. Problems were discussed in the forum of the general assembly. Communal life was based on democratic principles. After becoming bar-mitzvah every man was franchised, provided that he contributed to the community, was living in the city for a minimum of 3 years and was clean of

censure. The general assembly was made up of some 40 individuals. They elected the foreman (Rosh hakehila), the rabbi, his assistant, the cantor, the director of the choir, the secretary-clerk, the bookkeeper and the three attendants to the synagogue - the rabbi and the cantor holding an assignment for life. The decisions had to be approved by the fiscal and governmental authorities, which had the power to interfere in the activities of the community. After 1834, when Arad was decreed to be an autonomous township, certain rights were formally conferred onto the Jews. The city council commissioned a delegate in charge of overlooking the decisions of the community, their finances and the election of the officials. Customarily, the delegate was a well-known personality (for example in 1837, council member Scharfeneder, the future mayor, was delegated). Usually the person chosen to be the foreman, was of conservative orientation. The first liberal-oriented foreman, Moshe Hirschl, was elected in 1849, to be followed by Wolf Steinitzer, Leopold Epstein and Paul Wallfish, all of whom supported the reforms launched by Aaron Chorin. A major problem arose around the proper utilization of the monetary contributions (there were reports of irregularities concerning the misuse in the deployment of the funds) (\*68).

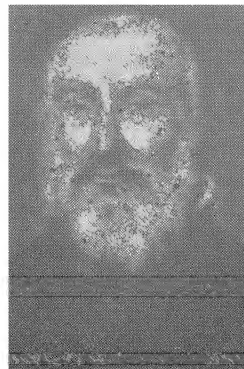
### **The Personality of the Rabbi Aaron Chorin & the Construction of the Grand Synagogue (1834)**

During that period, the rabbinical seat of the community in Arad was occupied by a personality who left his marks beyond the local scene. His reputation expanded beyond the borders of the area and the country, evidenced by the fact that numerous rabbinical personalities from Hungary and Germany had asked his advice on different actual theological questions.

In the year 1789, the Jewish people of Arad elected as chief rabbi, the young rabbi Aaron Chorin, barely aged 23, who remained in this office until his death in 1844 (\*69). The time period coincided with the proclivity to reform the religion, and he was one of the proponents.

This activity brought forth many admirers, but also numerous opponents, who disapproved of the attempts to change the traditional interpretations and introduce innovations in the religious cult.

**AARON CHORIN** was born in the year 1766 in Weisskirchen, in Moravia (today it is Hranitza in Czechia). As a youngster he had studied at the yeshiva of Nagymárton (today it is Mattersdorf in Austria), and continued his studies as a disciple of the gaon Jezekiel Landau in Prague.



He had married at the age of 17, and tried his hand at business but was unsuccessful. Recommended personally by the chief rabbi of Prague, he was elected to the position of chief rabbi of the small Jewish community of Arad, which at the time consisted only of 352 souls. Aaron Chorin brought forth innovations in the religious service, initiated changes in the sequence of prayers and was the first to introduce the organ in the synagogue rituals. When in 1797 the Archduke Joseph visited Arad, the chief rabbi Chorin, holding a Torah-scroll and surrounded by 200 of his disciples, organized a festive welcoming and greeted him with an exalted oration.

One of his first decisions to stir up a major debate in those times, was the license to consume the “stierl” (sturgeon) fish. According to Chorin this fish is in conformity with the biblical and talmudic canons (it has scales and it swims), while many rabbis from Transylvania and abroad desisted from its alimentary use. Rabbi Chorin upheld his point of view, without scoring an immediate success, in his treatise “Shirjon Kaskasim”, written in Hebrew and published in Prague (1799) (\*70).

The majority of his work was printed in Prague, like the “Emek Hashaveh” (1803), this one in Hebrew too. An introduction to this volume was written by the rabbi Moshe Münz from Old Buda, a premier authority of his time. A certain Jacob Friedberg, disagreeing with the progressive ideas of Chorin, asked the city council - unsuccessfully - to destroy this book and depose him from the position of chief rabbi ( an office he wanted to take over) (\*71).

The echo created by the dispute exceeded the local domain. In 1805, rabbi Chorin was summoned before a rabbinical council convened in Buda. The council was composed of the rabbinical heavyweights of the era: Moshe Sofer (Chatam Sofer - Bratislava), Markus Benedict (Nikolsburg), Moshe Münz (Buda) etc. and all of them were conservatives. The intent of this assembly was evident: to smother the expansion of the reform movement. It had started in Hamburg, and with the exception of Arad, it failed to reverberate in any parts of Transylvania, the Banat or Hungary.

The chief rabbi Chorin traveled to Buda and appeared before the rabbinical council which lasted for 2 days. The nonappearance of the rabbi Münz proved to be a disappointment. This absence was exploited by the other members of the council. The judgment compelled Aaron Chorin to retract his publication. In the case of noncompliance, his beard should be shorn - a major humiliation for a respected chief rabbi. Emerging from the session, Aaron Chorin was booed, and upon his returning to Arad, he was received with hostility by a small number of his flock. In the end Aaron Chorin appealed to the authorities of the local government, who rescinded the judgment of the rabbinical forum of Buda (1807) (\*72).

There were numerous protests put forward by the conservatives, as well as many retorts from the rabbi, but Chorin ended up winning all these confrontations.

Further volumes emerged like: "Imre Noam", "Davar Beito" (Vienna 1820), where problems of the Halakha are intermingled with philosophical meditations. "Igeret el Assaf, oder Sonderschreiben eines Afrikanischen Rabbi an seinen Kollegen in Europa, mit einem Vorworte" (Letters of an African Rabbi to his European colleagues) (Prague, 1826). Certainly the "African Rabbi" is Chorin himself, instructing his "European" colleagues on the innovations which ought to be introduced in the Judaic religious rituals (Vienna 1839). In the year 1821 the State of Baden requested Chorin's expert opinion concerning the duties of rabbis, and the reforms. The "Igeret el Assaf" may be a response to this request (\*73 ).

There is a significant opus dealing with the history of the Jews in Transylvania by Moshe Weinberger, emeritus professor of the Institute for Hebrew Studies of the New York Yeshiva University, formerly chief rabbi of the occidental rites community of Cluj, published in 1994. Herein he ponders at length on the importance of the community of Arad, and on the eminent figure of their rabbi, the reformer Aaron Chorin. In his opinion Aaron Chorin was considered to be dangerous by the traditionalists, because he presented the proposals for changing the deeply rooted canons, within the framework of an impressive erudition both in lay and in talmudic sciences. In the eyes of Chorin the most important laws are those governing human relations. The directive "love thy neighbor" is the worthiest of all.

The famous chief rabbi of Szeged, Leopold Löw, consistently tightfisted with praises, asserts in his book about Aaron Chorin, that for a lifetime (a generation) he was the most knowledgeable rabbi in Hungary (cited from the writings of chief rabbi Lajos Vágvölgyi).

In his last work entitled "Hillel", Chorin proposed the union of the Jews in a religious confederation, with Jerusalem being the spiritual center.

Additionally Aaron Chorin was one of the forerunners of the Hebrew language and poetry in Transylvania. He was proud of his gift enabling him to write poems in Hebrew. His first attempt in rhyme was "Seder laerev Rosh-Hodesh Adar" (The order of the prayers for the first of the lunar month of Adar) (Buda 1819). Often poems were included in other of his tomes (Shirjon Kaskasim, Emek Hashaveh, Nogah Hatzedek in 1818 dedicated to Eliezer Lieberman, a fellow - fighter for the reforms). In conclusion, Aaron Chorin was an innovator both in the move to reform the religion in Transylvania and the Banat, as well as in the domain of the modern Hebrew language and culture.

**The construction of the new synagogue** was from the very beginning a central concern of the community. Concomitant with the economic consolidation of the community and the increase in membership (812 in 1828), came the need for the construction of a new and more spacious synagogue. The initiative emanated from the chairman Moses Hirschl and the chief rabbi Aaron Chorin. The petitions forwarded to the City Council, resulted in the convocation of a general meeting of the council (1821), followed by the formation of a special commission chaired by Sabbas Thököli, a royal counselor. The commission determined that the synagogue and the school should be erected on the lot previously acquired by the community, in the back of the town hall (presently it is the house No.16 on the Avram Iancu Square). The construction of the new synagogue met with repeated delays. The reasons of the postponement were due both to the city administration and the Jewish community. The rabbi Chorin had to fight for the synagogue against a number of opponents. In the end priority was awarded to the construction of the school instead of the synagogue (\*74).

One step in the solving of the problem was the acquiring of the so-called “Steinbach building” (1823). There was even a proposition to put up a complex community building, which ought to include the synagogue (inside - a safety feature, not to be seen from outside), the school, the dwellings of the rabbi and the cantor, lodgings for pupils and commercial locations on the street level.

In 1826 the city council declared itself opposed to such a structure. Finally authorization was secured for the construction on the Fish Square, but the Regency Council of the County, proscribed the start of the works. In this situation the chairman of the community implemented a really dauntless step. On April 24, 1827, they started the excavation of the foundations without further waiting for the permission (\*75). The reaction of the county was swift. The cavities dug out in daytime were filled up at night (\*76). At that moment the chairman of the community, Moses Hirschl, had an innovative idea. He traveled to Vienna and asked for an audience with the Emperor Franz. When admitted to his presence, Moses Hirschl offered him as a gift the synagogue to be constructed. Hirschl explained to the emperor the reasoning behind this unusual gift. The emperor accepted the offering and concomitantly proffered a decoration to Moses Hirschl (\*77). From that instant, nobody could oppose the construction of the temple, as it became imperial property. The Regency Council of the County gave its approval, and the foundation-stone of the synagogue was laid on June 13, 1828. All the ensuing numerous difficulties (the main entrance had to be made in the back, the opening of commercial spaces on street level was prohibited, etc.) were finally overcome. The interior was planned and furnished according to the model of the reform-synagogues from Germany. By 1834 the synagogue was finished.

The inauguration of the new synagogue can be considered to be the pinnacle of the rabbinical career of Aaron Chorin. In the same year (1834) Arad was elevated to the rank of Free Royal City. A royal representative, baron Orczy, did arrive for the event, and also visited the synagogue together with his retinue. Receiving him festively, the chief rabbi Aaron Chorin extended his blessings, with the whole community being in attendance in the new temple. The organ was installed only in 1841. On June 17, 1928, there was a festive celebration commemorating the centenary of the synagogue (100 years since the laying of the foundation-stone).

Aaron Chorin passed away on August 24, 1844, and was buried 2 days later. The bells of each and every church in the city were ringing during the funeral procession. All the notables of the city participated in the burial, and the funeral eulogy was issued in the major Judaic and Christian publications of Central Europe.

In the Jewish cemetery of Arad-Grădiște, near the southwest entry, which is called the Ignác Deutsch entrance, there is an unostentatious mausoleum, erected in 1851, 7 years after the death of the rabbi. This mausoleum, ravaged by the passing years, contains the tomb of Aaron Chorin, with a small statue of his head in white Carrara marble made by Jacob Guttman, the well-known scion of a Jewish family in Arad and a famous sculptor. In that image the rabbi is represented with his eyes closed, in a Hellenistic-neoclassical manner, like a semblance of the philosopher Solon, emanating majesty and austerity. The titles of his most important publications are engraved on the sculpture in Hebrew. A few years ago this statue disappeared from the mausoleum and was not found ever more. One of the subsequent chief-rabbis, Dr. Lajos Vágvölgyi, did write on the subject of the background of the Jewish community of Arad. Herein he portrays Aaron Chorin as an older man, bright, dynamic, commanding a practical intelligence.

Chorin was hardened by the numerous conflicts and fierce fights experienced during his long life. He was an outstanding thinker, poet and fighter, being concomitantly a dreamer and a man of action. He was a person of antithetical facets, amalgamating the contrasts, gentle and forbearing when needed, but severe and quite hard with his peers and the rabbis who opposed him, ready to tackle anyone. One could say that he liked and even looked forward to a confrontation, because the disputations steeled his will and honed his mind. Any victory in a struggle concerning concepts, guided him towards a new and more radical development, never for the sake of his own glory but always striving to improve matters for his flock.

We quote a passage from the writings of the chief rabbi Dr. L. Vágvölgyi: “The broad vista of the ideas, the will and the ardor, the firmness of

his character in a gallant fight, all these fated him to much rancor during his lifetime, but also secured him a radiant reputation”.

On the base of the tombstone, underneath the image sculpted by Jacob Guttman, engraved in Hebrew, is an epitaph composed by Aaron Chorin himself (translated into Romanian for the original of this book by I. Waldman):

*I quietly landed onto the peaceful shore  
pulling in from stormy seas and bitter waves.  
Persistently did He guide my pace.  
I kneel before his fairy-lighted throne  
and hallow Him forever, for those who will follow on.  
I reached the goal of fate yearned.  
The body should repose in quiet sleep  
and rest its striving; the winged spirit  
should soar in the airs  
to the Almighty. To behold his look.  
When the sky is glittering on the horizon  
and my path ran through, the end presaged  
from God gets on. You awaken from your dreams  
and I behold You again, divine image.  
The faith will be our eternal shelter  
the placid lake of our whole life.*

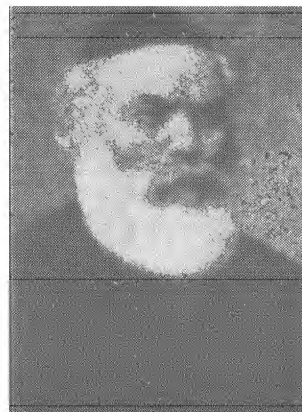
Above this inscription, just below the sculpture proper, one finds another, quite appropriate quote from the Genesis: “And the whole gathering saw that Aaron was dead, and the whole house of Israel was mourning him”.

Trying to analyze and draw a judgment on the personality of Aaron Chorin, we could conclude the following: Chorin was a great authority and devotee of the Judaic traditions. Concomitantly he was aware of the need to reform a number of those religious practices which became antithetical to progress. Understanding the pull of the times and the need for emancipation, he tried to adorn the services in the synagogue to make them more attractive and thus lessen the isolation of the Jewish community. With this goal on his mind, he beheld the vocation to smash the stale frameworks which hampered the spiritual evolution, considering himself to be an intellectual follower of Moses Mendelsohn.

### Those who Continued the Pursuit of Aaron Chorin

After the death of the eminent Aaron Chorin, his successor became again a young rabbi (it should be recalled that Aaron Chorin himself started his activity in Arad at the age of 23 years), by the name of Jacob Steinhardt (1817 or 1818-1885).

**JACOB STEINHARDT** was born in Mako, in the Cenad county in Hungary. He studied first at the local yeshiva of the rabbi Ullman, and furthermore at Bratislava, with the famous rabbi Sofer. Concurrent with his ecclesiastical activities he devoted himself also to journalism - demonstrating the thorough command of the Hungarian language, as well as of the German one. He was the first Hungarian Jew to edit a Hungarian language periodical called the "Hirnök" (Messenger). In that newspaper he published accounts of the discourses proffered at the deliberations of the 1843 Diet in Bratislava (\*78).

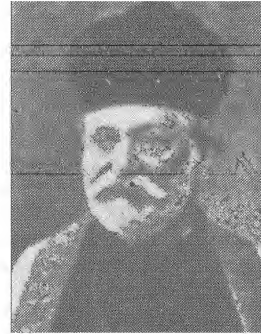


In 1845 he was invited to Arad as a successor to Aaron Chorin. On the occasion of his installation (April 18, 1845), it was for the first time that a sermon was spoken in Hungarian language, and afterwards he continued to elaborate on topics in excellent German. His decisions and his Talmudic commentaries (stored in the archives of the community) were authored in the Hungarian language. On the local scene rabbi Steinhardt consolidated the reforms ushered in by Aaron Chorin. He was quite popular within the community, as well as in the Gentile society and the administration. He was designated by the government to be part of the delegation which was to set up the organization of the rabbinical seminary. His death spelled a major loss for the community, which remembered him with gratitude and respect.

We mention two notable personalities amongst the prominent figures of the community of Arad: the cantor David Stengel (\*79) (going back to time of Aaron Chorin), and the secretary Lipot Rosenberg, who put in 6 decades as a clerk for the community.

A neighboring community, as old as the one in Arad, existed in Șimand. It was a rival to Arad, and gave two prominent personalities to the Jews of Transylvania: Avram Friedman was chief rabbi of Transylvania for 34 years, and Lazar Shreinka, who was first rabbi in Șimand and later the principal of the school in Arad (\*80).

Following the wise Jacob Steinhardt in the rabbinical seat was **Dr. ALEXANDER ROSENBERG**, born and educated like his predecessor in the neighboring township of Mako. He started in his profession in Oradea and Kaposvár, where like his colleague Steinhardt in Arad, he did introduce the practice of offering sermons in the Hungarian language. His introductory address was an enthusiastic success, and did contribute in securing his nomination to the local rabbinical seat (\*81). He strongly condemned anti-Semitism in his speeches.



His main virtue was to be a mediator between Christians and Jews, with the intent of breaking down the isolation of the Jews. He was viciously attacked, because his position concerning mixed marriages was very controversial. He believed that by blessing such a matrimony, one can prevent these Jews from falling off, provided that the children born from such a marriage will stay within the Jewish religion (\*82). Certain antagonists, like the Jewish theologian Szabolcsi from Budapest, believed that such a stance would encourage the disengagement of people from Judaism and religion. The death of the rabbi Rosenberg in the summer of 1909, was a major loss to the whole community of Arad (\*83).

We have to mention that in the years 1903-1904, the Jewish people of Arad did cleave into two distinct communities: the orthodox and the neologue ones. From that date on, each community had its own independent administration.

After the passing away of Alexander Rosenberg, **Dr. LAJOS VÁGVÖLGYI** was installed as rabbi of the occidental rites (neologue) community. A person endowed with multifaceted, ample knowledge, he was an excellent speaker. His sermons in the Hungarian language, as well as his speeches delivered on different occasions at the institutions under his aegis, were dynamic and most impacting upon the listeners and members of the community.



An essay signed by him and published in the monthly “Mult és Jövő” of August 1917, dealt with the past and present of the Jews of Arad, examined the communal institutions and looked at his predecessors in the rabbinical seat, as well as at Jewish scientists, writers and artists of Arad. That article was used as a source for details of the present publication.

A distinctive trait of the chief rabbi Dr. Vágvölgyi was his warm solidarity with the universal fate of the Jewish people. This is proven by the article signed by him and published in the paper "Uj Kelet" # 144 from July 6, 1921, where he writes: "I appealed to the people of my parish, to be aware of the terrible things happening in the Ukraine and the pogroms in Poland (referring to the pogroms committed by the forces of the Hetman Petliura). The people of my community should keep in mind that the Jewish victims from there, poor or rich, young or old, the scholars or the honest uneducated ones, they all share with us the heritage of a Jewish soul. That blessed Jewish spirit, whose warmth emerges even from underground, has to stay living with us. Now the Jewish hearts will have to stir, because Keren Haiesod is not a political matter, but one of the full Jewish spirit"... "to find a new home and a new land for those who share our ancestry, and whose life had been made unbearable in their original place"... The title of the article is "The none-Zionist", and this designation mirrors some of the reticence the chief rabbi displayed toward the Jewish national movement.

A change in his mentality occurred only towards the end of his life. Although he could not completely overcome the doubts arising from his attitude toward Zionism and the spreading of the modern Hebrew language, Dr. Vágvölgyi did gradually grasp the hopelessness of the assimilation. The unfolding in his thinking emerges in an address to the WIZO in 1934, dealing with the issue (\*84). In 1937, the positive contribution of the chief rabbi to the success of the Keren Haiesod campaign and to the installation of the local office of the Jewish Agency (Sochnut), are vigorously reflecting the new position he had bonded to (\*85).

The progress in the thinking and the actions of the chief rabbi Dr. Vágvölgyi, were enhanced by the advent in 1939 of the associate chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, with whom Dr. Vágvölgyi had a congenial cooperation from the very beginning. The death of the chief rabbi Dr. Vágvölgyi in 1941, occurred in turbulent times, with the Holocaust on the horizon, when the effects of the major shudders abroad were already perceived in our small hometown.

The two Jewish communities were guided at that time by the two rabbis. Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld (neologue) and Joachim Schreiber (orthodox). It is beyond doubt that there were rivalries between those two communities, with superimposed misunderstandings and animosities. Nevertheless there was a powerful pull, expressed in common actions, reciprocal help and collaboration in those matters which really mattered.

**Dr. JOSIF (NICOLAE-MIKLOS) SCHÖNFELD**

was born in the village of Negrești, Satu Mare county. He received his basic religious education in the yeshivas of Tasnád and Sighișoara. He pursued his studies at the Rabbinical Seminary and University of Budapest, graduating in 1937 with the title of rabbi, as well as doctor in philosophy, philology and history. His later involvement in situations where strong pressures were applied on him, confirmed the fortitude of his character in difficult circumstances.



In 1941 he was chosen to be the chief rabbi of the occidental rites community in Arad, in which post he was active until 1961, when he emigrated to Israel, together with his wife Agnes, and their daughter Amira.

He was of a mild and reflective disposition, he displayed affection and benevolence toward people, lacking the passion for confrontation. His spirit, enlightened to a generous humane stance, had a global outlook and accepted no narrow-minded restrictions. He knew how to call for respect, he was a good educator and mediator. He had a major share in the campaigns to reeducate the public (called social restratification), with special attention to the younger people. His educational goals were not limited to the knowledge of the religious precepts and Jewish history, but he also insisted in fostering the modern Jewish culture, conveyed in the Yiddish and Hebrew languages. The teaching of Hebrew during the religious education and later even outside it, was the subject of long-standing controversy. He pushed toward the acceptance of the importance of the Hebrew language, and he introduced it forcefully into the teaching program of the Jewish Lyceum, whose principal he became on its inception in 1941.

During the war he demonstrated his solidarity and sense of community. He arranged collections for the Jewish people of Arad who were sent to the work-camps, for those deported to Transnistria, for the refugees from Northern Transylvania, and for the families in need. During the Hungarian military occupation he did not leave the city, he negotiated successfully with the delegates of the army, and had a hand in delaying the concentration of Jews in the ghetto of the fortress.

After the end of the war he assisted Jewish refugees on their way from the Nazi camps to their homes in Northern Transylvania. He was active in the "Or", the local chapter of the Bnai Brit. His weekly addresses to the community were important in sustaining the morale. Later during the era of the communist totalitarianism, his pro-Zionist stance led to courageous confrontations with the

regime. He was twice detained, sentenced and incarcerated, thus becoming an Assir-Zion.

Following his aliyah, (1961) Dr. Schönfeld resumed the work of an educator and researcher, staying close to the people of his former community. His death in July of 1994 was a major loss to the Jews originating from Arad.

The colleague of Dr. Schönfeld in the rabbinical seat of the orthodox community was **Joachim Schreiber**. Details will be rendered in another chap.8.

After the departure of the chief rabbi Dr.Schönfeld to Israel, the rabbinical seat (at that time unified for both communities) was held by the following rabbis: **Lerner, Kesztenbaum Nicolae** (1963-65), **Müller** and **Wiznitzer**. Presently this task is fulfilled in Arad by the chief rabbi of Timișoara, **Dr. Ernest Neumann**.



**Dr. Ernest Neumann**

### **A Model of a Properly Established Community**

Throughout the second half of the XIX-th and the first decades of the XX-th century, numerous worthy institutions were created within the community of Arad, due to the beneficence of a large number of Jewish people. The donations were oriented mainly towards sustaining certain educational and charitable institutions, or geared to special socio-cultural goals (supporting the instruction of some pupils, providing a dowry for the matrimony of various orphans, etc.).

The most important donations came from the ladies Fischer Eliz and Juliana Dobler, as well as from Ignác Deutsch, Bernard Deutsch, Ignác Spitzer, Adalbert Haas, baron Adolf Neumann, baron Daniel Neumann, baroness Maria Fürst Neumann, Marika Neumann, Ignác Leopold, Melchior Schreier, Adolf Klein, Jacob Kaufmann, Simon Brasch, S.N.Kohn, etc. (\*86).

The archives of the community are revealing for the year 1923, the existence of a capital of lei 685,000, recalculated from crowns (that was the valid currency of the Austro-Hungarian Empire). Out of this amount, lei 400,000 was in cash, allocated by the Ignác Spitzer foundation for the needs of the old age home. In 1935 the worth of these accounts was close to lei 1,100,000. Tantamount to these were the gifts of real estate, which either assured considerable income from the rental fees, or housed some of the significant institutions of the community.

In the pages of the newspaper Uj Kelet #70 of March 31, 1921, the readers were advised that Fischer Eliz, a very wealthy lady (past her 90-th year), had bequeathed in her will from 1905, buildings valued at 300,000 crowns

(approx. lei 1,400,000) to the Jewish community. The will directed that the profits should be used for the establishment of a home for young Jewish orphan girls, in order to ensure a sound future for them.

The **orphanage of the girls** was created through this foundation, housing on the average 15-17 young girls. A proper dowry was provided in case any of them got married. Such was the case with Irina Farkas, Marika Aszodi, Mary Gelman, etc. (\*87). Whenever such an orphan needed rest and recuperation after a certain illness, she was sent to a hospice. Thus was the case of the maiden Anna Hersch, who stayed for 6 month at the Geoagiu Spa in 1927. Likewise Serena Klein, suffering from a pulmonary affliction, was sent for half a year to a therapeutic institution in 1939 (\*88). Mrs. Jolanda Neuländer was the administrator of the home for many years. The curator of the Fischer Eliz foundation was by custom the chairman of the community. The foundation had a significant income from real estate rentals, and these were also used to support indirectly other communal institutions, mainly by long-term, low-interest loans. The collaboration between various communal institutions was the key to success for some deeds entailing large investments. Examples are the setting up of the new cemetery on the Simand Road in a short time span (second half of 1935 - first half of 1936), or the loans to the Hevra Kadisha , totaling lei 170,000, and later again lei 300,000, on March 29, 1931, and in 1936, etc, (\*89).

During both World Wars, the orphanage building, situated on the main thoroughfare of the city was seized by the authorities. As of 1936, there was a tendency to steer the girls living in the home, towards a utilitarian vocation (hairdressing, tailoring, etc.).

The **boy's orphanage** was established in 1870-71, thanks to donations from Ignác and Bernát Deutsch de Hatvan, as well as from the Reiner family. On its inception, 6 youngsters were admitted to the home. Later this number increased to 20. The orphans were provided with complete sustenance. From the admission on, a thorough care was given continually, until they grew up. The idea of learning practicable professions was put forward early on. Consecutive gifts elevated the capital to the sum of 200,000 crowns. The building of the orphanage was in use even after the Second World War, providing support for many youngsters (\*90).

The lack of similar institutions in other communities of Transylvania and the Banat, lead to requests by numerous out-of-town candidates. The curators of the establishments strove to accept all of them, within the limits of the possibilities. It is noteworthy that in 1926, out of 7 children admitted to the girl's orphanage, 2 came from Petrosani and one from Lugoj. In 1933 two youngsters were admitted to the boys home, from Orăștie. Due to the conditions

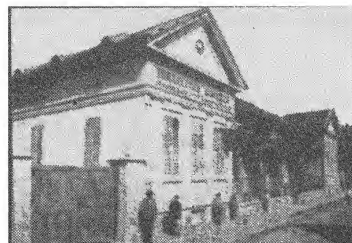
created by the Second World War and the difficult period immediately following, the requests for admission to the orphanage homes from out-of-towners, became even more emphatic.

**The old age home** was inaugurated in 1913 with gifts from Ignác Spitzer (100,000 crowns) and Beti Haas. Those were complemented with donations from the barons Ștefania and Alfred Neumann. The statute of the home was renewed in 1918, and there were no stipulations about the need of financial contributions from those admitted. However, it became customary to require the offering of a certain amount. The guiding principle was, that the inmates to whom a certain degree of comfort was assured, should be those penurious older people, who if left outside the Home, would have soon become destitute. At any rate, with the passage of time, 50% of those admitted were old people, unable to satisfy this condition, having no means whatsoever. As such they were placed in rooms with multiple beds. The old age home was operative for many years in the building on the Greceanu Street (later called Eugen Pottier, today renamed Octavian Goga), until it was taken over by the state authorities.

**The charity house** was likewise endowed from the gifts of the Deutsch de Hatvan families and the barons Ștefania and Alfred Neumann. It was a philanthropic establishment, having no income on its own. Its continued existence was made possible by subsidies from the Hevra Kadisha and the women's organization in Arad. It was a home for those old people who were not able to manage without assistance. During the years 1944-45 Jewish survivors of concentration and death camps were admitted and treated there. For many years this institution was under the leadership of Mr. Ernest Pálfi, whose selfless efforts ensured its smooth and efficient running. After the Second World War (1948) the institution was integrated with the Old Age Home, and is presently operating efficiently in the building of the community on the Episcopiei Street (the former 7 Noembrie).

**The food-kitchen** was engendered through the foundation of the Neumann family: the baroness Maria Fürst Neumann and the barons Daniel and Carol Neumann. Presently it is also located in the building of the Old Age Home (Episcopiei Street). Low-cost hot meals are provided for all who are in need of it. A **ritual bath** was set up and hot water was introduced within. An modest **ambulance** service existed since 1848.

In 1840 was built the first **Jewish hospital** in the actual Ghica Vodă street. In 1861, donations from Bernát Deutsch and Ignác Spitzer made possible the establishing of a 30 bed hospital furnished with modern equipment.



Here free medical care was granted to Jewish people. Later a policlinic was added, staffed with 2 physicians and nurses. Drs. M. Robicsek and I. Schuster have to be pointed out as offering their services for free. The later development of the hospital will be dealt with in another chapter.

**The societies for assistance** were continually active within the community up to the start of the Second World War. Examples are: "Humanitas", founded by Josef Herz and Heinrich Blau; "The Society for Assisting Matrimony" supplementing dowries for indigent girls that was founded in 1867 and chaired by S.N. Kohn. The same individual had founded in 1880 "The Society for Assistance in case of Illness and Burials, Gemiluth Chesed", providing tangible help for pregnant women, and for needy parents whose children were steered toward a yeshiva. Furthermore in 1841 the rabbi Aaron Chorin initiated the inception of the "Women's Charitable Society" with a prolific and sweeping activity in many areas, mainly health-care, education and charities (for example the food-kitchen).

**Hevra Kadisha** came into being in its basic format, as far back as the XVIII-th century. As previously mentioned its founder was Isac Elias in 1729. A statute dating from 1770 was renewed in 1869. At that time the institution numbered 520 contributing members. By 1900 the tally went up to 700. Amongst the tasks fulfilled we cite the burial of the Jewish people, the setting up, fencing in, arranging and maintenance of the (neologue) cemetery in Grădiște, as well as the building of the orthodox cemetery (1906). The care of the cemeteries provided significant income to the Hevra Kadisha. This was used among others for helping out in the health care of the Jewish people, helping the Charity House, assisting the start up and maintenance of the hospital, and helpful contributions to those community members who were afflicted, hurt, unable to work, sick and aged.

Special mention has to be made of the continuous attention given by the community to the maintenance and evolution of the **elementary school**. This institution with a well-deserved reputation was established in 1832. The building (on 2 Luptei Square) was erected with the financial contributions from Julianna Dobler, baron Adolf Neumann and Jacob Hirschl. As far back as 1835 there were two mixt classes. After 1854, the refurbishing of the educational system expanded the learning to 7 years. In 1850 there was a conference of the Jewish schools in Budapest, with Paul Wallfish being the delegate from Arad. Consequently in 1855 a model girl's school was instituted. As of 1851 a professional school was set up, with 90 pupils (not all of them Jewish) in 12 vocational lines, from the very year of its inception. The educational reforms in 1862 resulted in the creation of two curriculae: the "higher elementary" (8 classes) and the "lower real" (4 classes). From the very start the school had 12

instructors. In 1872 the school became a state educational facility (lyceum) with German language schooling, having two classes of 35 pupils each (\*91).

For a long period of time, these Jewish schools in Arad were models of organization and curriculum for other communities in Transylvania. We have to point out that despite financial problems, the remuneration and pensions of the teachers were never affected. The school published a yearbook on its 100-th anniversary in 1932, indicating that for the school year 1931-32, 85% of the total budget were provided by the occidental rites community. Only about one third of the pupils had to pay school assessments, the remainder of the expenditures being supplied by financing from the baron Adolf Neumann foundation and the contributions of the orthodox community. In addition to exempting the penurious pupils from paying school taxes, the school managed to provide free meals for 60% of the pupils, as well as further assistance in the form of clothing and footwear. It should be pointed out that non-Jewish children were also enrolled as pupils (\*92).

The problem of the teaching language was raised after the changes brought about in 1918. At the time there were not enough educators able to teach in the Romanian or Hebrew languages (as provided by the new rules). The curators of the school and the leadership of the community had decided in 1922 to initiate the compulsory use of the Romanian language. Regrettably, the leaders in charge of the education, in contrast to those from the neighboring communities in Timișoara, Oradea and Cluj, did not consider essential to establish a Jewish high school. This objective was implemented only in 1941, during the difficult times of the onset of the Second World War, subsequent to an edict from October 1940, whereby Jewish pupils were banned from state high schools.

The elementary school in Arad had a reputation created by its performance for over 100 years, and this is primordially due to its pedagogues. From the XIX-th century on we have to point out the first principal of the school **Lázár Shreinka**, furthermore Leo Jeitelesz, Ignác Beck, Lázár Kanitzer, Carolina Fuchsel, Rozalia Steiner, Wilhelm Ottenberg, Abraham Pfefferkorn, Albert Seidner (Szilágyi), Leopold Grünwald, Ármin Neumann and Wilhelm Schütz (\*93). In the XX-th century we have to mention the following: Mor Eckstein (he served the school for a total of 45 years), Mor Lefkovics (his pedagogic activity spanned 26 years), Iléana Schreiber (she was for a long period of time the principal of the girl's school), Dezső Groszman (he was the principal of the boy's school for over 10 years, up to 1936), Mor Kronowith (the principal of the boy's school after 1936). Additionally we have to specify other significant teachers: Irina Kornai, Fanny Weisz, Anci (Anna) Földes, Margit Kaufman, Miklos Luger, Szerén Szántó, Lajos Szántai, Hedda Szöllösi, Dániel

Sebökö, etc. Mention should be made of Avram Löwenkopf, previously rabbi of the Orşova community, highly knowledgeable in the Hebrew language, who had started to teach Hebrew in the later years of the school's existence.

There were many **notables**, besides the rabbis and cantors, who had distinguished themselves within the occidental rites community since its consolidation (after 1860) up to the period of the Second World War. These Jewish individuals were mostly influential and well to-do, they did establish and finance institutions as well as charitable actions and helped their brethren-in-creed during rough times.

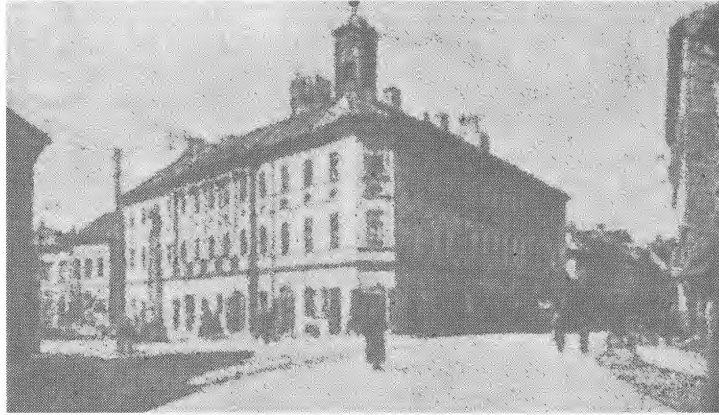
It is impossible to present here a complete roster, nevertheless we cite the following: Paul Wallfish, Leopold Epstein, Moses Hirschl, Ignác Deutsch, Bernat Deutsch, József Hirschmann, Wilhelm Bing, Ignác Spitzer, baroness Maria Fürst-Neumann, baron Adolf Neumann, etc. We have previously mentioned Leopold Rosenberg, who for over 50 years was the secretary-clerk of the community, starting from 1849. He succeeded his worthy father Carol Rosenberg, who was killed in the street by imperial troops repressing the revolution, the only reason for the slaying having been his affirmative answer to the query if he is Jewish.

The charitable and educational activity during the XX-th century, came along under the leadership of the occidental rites community, nevertheless it was extended to all Jewish people in Arad, regardless to community to which they did belong. This required the creation and constant maintenance of operating ties between the leaderships of the occidental rites and orthodox communities, a link that was by in large, working smoothly. This collaboration was rooted in the belief that applicants from both religious communities are getting involved on equal footing in the communal institutions. The orthodox community was supposed to lay out the expenses incurred on the behalf of its members, but they were generally more penurious, and as such they received more exemptions from levies and contributions. The plant for manufacturing the Passover "matzes" was under the control of the orthodox community. On certain occasions when the support of an institution depended on contributions from both communities, a proportion of 70% for the neologue community and 30% for orthodox one was implemented, reflecting the balance of the tallies of the Jewish population in Arad. Occasionally this way of dividing the expenses did create temporary divergences (for instance when an organization was created in order to manage the Jewish hospital in 1947-48), but efforts were always made to consensual problems solving.

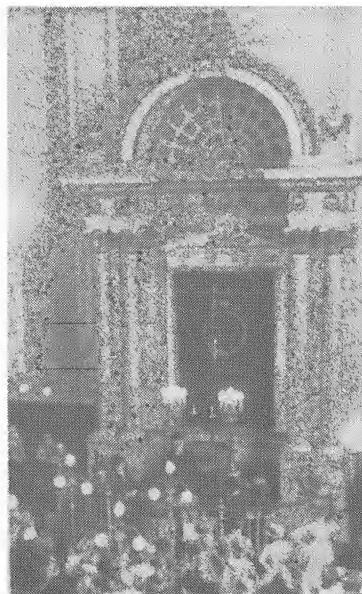
The smooth running of the communal activities was also due to the functional continuity and the selfless resolution of various individuals: the lawyer Heinrich Schütz was for 25 years member of the leadership, and for 15

years chairman of the community of occidental rites. Dr. Jacob Keppich was for 14 years chairman of the Hevra Kadisha, and for 10 years curator of the schools. Further we should name Mrs. Éles, for 10 years chairperson of the Jewish Women's Organization in Arad, Andor Deutsch for many years chairman of certain foundations, Desideriu Groszmann, prematurely deceased, who was principal of the Jewish school and chairman of the Jewish Teacher's Union in Transylvania, Alexandru Bornstein and Andor Ádler, who have spent long years in the management of Jewish affairs. The pioneers of the Zionist movement: Dr. Eugen Singer, Josif Kalmár, Henrik Szenes, Maxim (Miksa) König - were active within the leadership of the community. Furthermore: Dr. Alexandru Herzog, Filip Huppert, Aladár Lakatos (a dynamic leader and for many years chairman of the community), Dr. Alexandru Dohány, pharm. Dr. Tiberiu Renyi, Alfred Groszmann, Carol Kabos, Dr. Ármin Gara, Oszkár Dán, Jonel Friedland, Zoltán Raab (for many years the secretary-clerk of the community), all of the above were prolific and active supporters of the interests of the community. Mention should be made moreover of those Jewish activists who resided in the smaller communities of Arad County: Emil Weisz, Alexander Fon and Dr. Efraim Deutsch in Chişineu Criş, K. Stasser in Pecica, Kálmán Szücs in Nădlac, L. Weisz in Pâncota, Ignác Vértes in Ineu, Béla Popper in Buteni, Henrik Polacsek in Gurahonţ.

The firm footing of the Jewish communal activities in Arad enabled this fraternity to endure the hardships of the Second World War and the immediately following time period. The installation of the communist system in Romania, destroyed the financial underpinnings of the community, effectively crippling it.



The building of the Community and the Synagogue



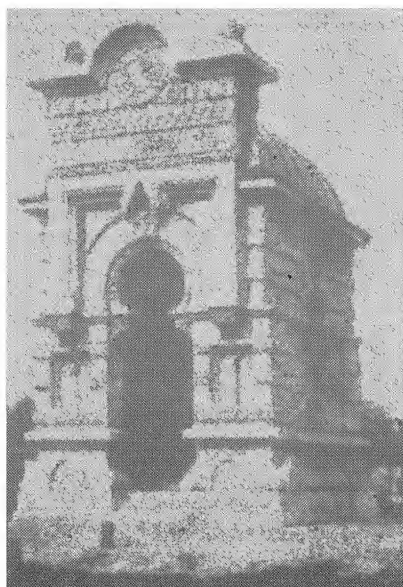
The interior of the new  
Neologue synagogue



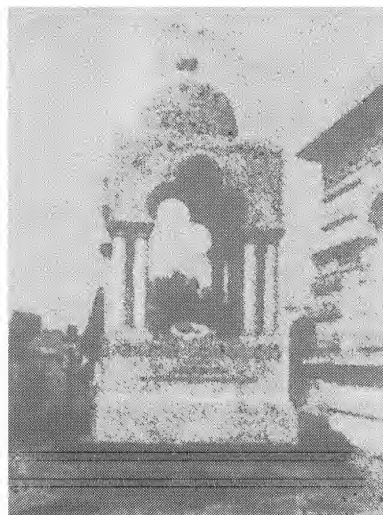
The entrance to the vault  
of the rabbi Aaron Chorin in the Cemetery of Arad



The bust of the rabbi  
Aaron Chorin atop his tombstone



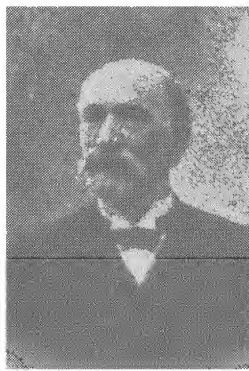
The funeral monument  
of the rabbi Steinhardt



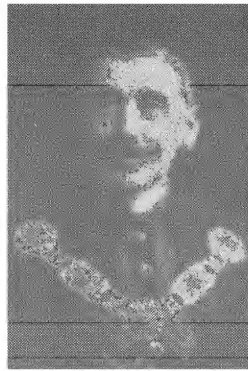
The funeral monument  
of the rabbi Rosenberg



**Mozes Hirschl**



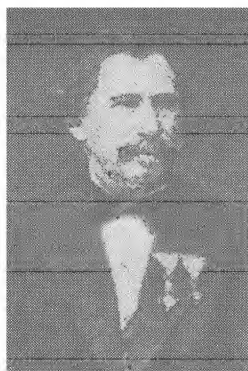
**Vilmos Bing**



**Dr. Zsigmond Nemes**



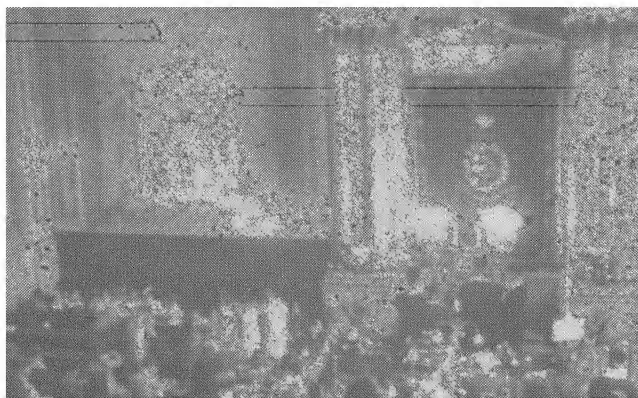
**Bernát Deutsch**



**Jozef Hirschman**



**Ignác Deutsch**



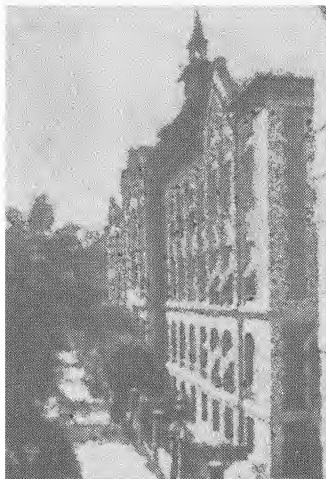
**A Bat-Mitzvah festivity on a Shavuot day in the Neologue Synagogue**



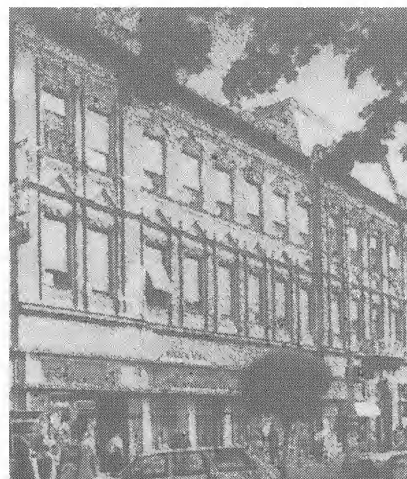
The building of the former Old Age Home on the Greceanu Street



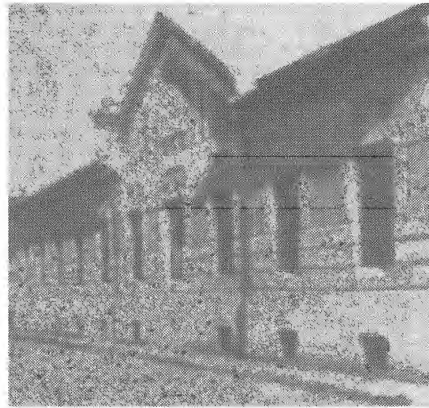
The present building of the Old Age Home on the Episcopiei Street



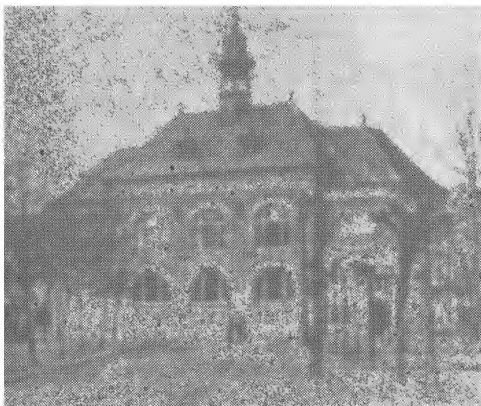
The Fischer Eliz Orphanage for Girls



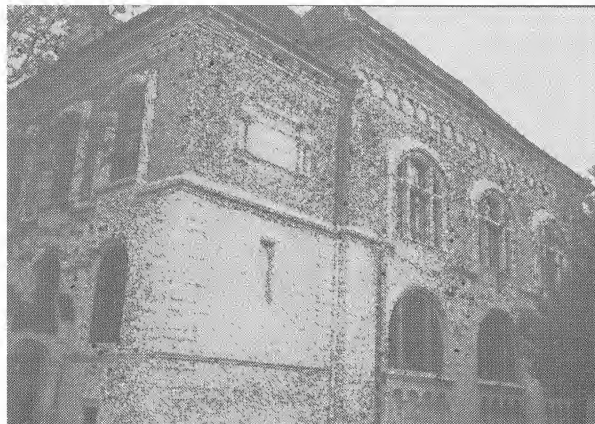
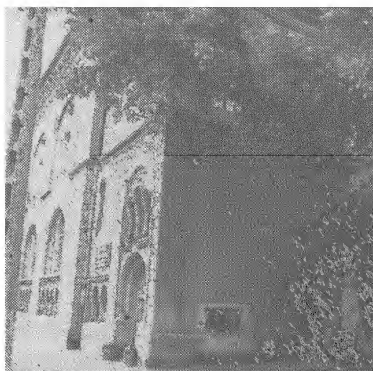
The front of the Fischer Eliz Orphanage for Girls on the main boulevard



**The Orphanage for Boys  
on the Seminarului Street**



**The Jewish Elementary  
Grade School in Arad**



**The Elementary Grade School**



Pupils from a class of the  
elementary Grade School  
The teacher is Fisher Margit



A class in the courtyard  
of the Neologue Temple  
The Teacher is Alexander Amigo

**Classes of the Elementary Grade School**



A class in the year 1941/42.  
The Teacher is Szerén Szántó

### Classes of the Elementary Grade School



A class in the year 1942/43  
The teacher is Földes Anci



A class in the year 1943/44

## **Chapter 6**

### **Facets of the Existence of the Jews in Arad, during the Period between the Democratic Revolution of 1848, and the Start of the First World War (The period of 1848-1914)**

The second half of the last century was marked by an increased tendency of emancipation in the Jewish community. There was an ascendancy of liberal proclivities, with concomitant maintenance of animosity towards the Jews. As cited in the previous chapter, the rising sociopolitical emancipation, coupled with the religious one, did meet along the way with a certain degree of liberalization on part of the county leadership. In 1847, the year of the Bratislava Diet, the local delegate János Bohus, proposed to grant civic rights to the Jews, meaning the rights of settling and voting. In view of the well known, definitely anti-Semitic attitude of the city council, this was gratefully welcome by the Jews.

The onset of the revolution on March 13, 1848 in Vienna, and on March 15 in Budapest reverberated in Arad too. On March 18, in the locale of the theater owned by Moshe Hirschl (which became subsequently the "Urania" movie theater) there were demonstrations, and certain demands were formulated (\*94). How did the Jews react to this? In a positive matter, and even a number of Jews did participate in the demonstrations. The rabbi Steinhardt, faithful to his background and ideals, which guided him towards identification with the Hungarian people, orated passionately in the synagogue. The reactionary city council, entrenched in the vanishing system, tried to hold on to its worn-out evanescent positions. The staunchest anti-Semites faded from public life only after a new leadership of the council was balloted through a democratic election, the first such mayor being Gábor Török, and subsequently Dimitrie Haica. Some well-to-do Jews like Ignát Deutsch and I. Robitsek (\*95), (the later probably related to the physician Robitsek who was active in the Jewish hospital) were elected - a first in the annals of the city - into the council. We have to mention the intensely progressive activity of the teacher Leo Jajtelesz, which did land him in jail after the suppression of the revolution. He was released only after contracting typhoid fever.

The long coveted legislative reforms were approved by the Hungarian Diet on April 11, 1848, and being prompted by the circumstances, were - reluctantly - accepted by the court in Vienna.

These reforms were perceived as a major disappointment by the Jews, because they did not support and bolster the emancipation. They did not offer

legal status to the mosaic religion. Even a historian with a backward and anti-Semitic reputation, like Elek Fényes (\*96), had to admit that the reforms were far from being thorough. Nevertheless there was a certain degree of liberation: the feudal jurisdiction was abolished (the repeal of the rights of the landowners concerning the Jews within the feudal domain) and in a qualified manner, some common civic rights were awarded. Likewise, the annulment by the Hungarian government of the need to pay the so-called "tolerance levies" originating in the Medieval times, was an important step in the emancipation. In order to urge the total emancipation of the Jews, the community of Arad did dispatch a delegation to the Jewish assembly in Budapest (June 5-10, 1848). The head of the delegation was Paul Wallfish and following his contacting the parliamentarian Kállai, a bill was introduced initiating the design. The project did not become subject of a debate (\*97). Concomitantly with the outward liberation activity, there were strong emancipatory stirrings within the Jewish communities. Starting on June 13, 1848, the radical reformers began to drum up support. The group which wanted to break away from the prior orientation of the leaders of the Jewish community, had its ideas displayed in the work of Samuel Holtheim entitled "Denkschrift an die Israelische Reformgemeinde in Arad". Similar writings were published in the local Jewish newspaper "Patriot" (significant designation), under the management of Leo Jajteles (\*98).

Concurrently the Croats, the Serbs and other non-Hungarian nationalities, started to be aroused. This was due to the fact that the leaders of the Hungarian revolution were extremely nationalistically oriented, and had no programs oriented towards the national minorities. The forces of the Austro-Hungarian army were extremely spread out, they were weakened and lacked the motivation to suppress national movements, and as such were ineffective. Their commanders executed the orders coming from Pest in a careless and unenthusiastic manner. Faced with this situation the government tried to mobilize the national guards, composed of armed civilians. In the Arad area too, such guard units started to be activated, recruiting local men. At the beginning the authorities were opposed to the idea of admitting the Jews into the guard units. In the end - following a meeting on June 10, 1848, - the governing bodies of Arad accepted the admission of Jews. 80 male Jews took the oath. 10 of those were ranked, one of them became a second lieutenant. Wilhelm Bettelheim, Ignác Deutsch, Francisc Mittelmann, Josif Singer and István Landshut-Aradi did see action in the southern area of the Banat (\*99).

At the same time the recruiting for the "Honvéds" (military corps) was started, and at the initiative of the community 14 Jews volunteered for a 3 years period. In the period of June 1848 - August 1849, young Jews joined up with the revolutionary army (the statistics pinpoint 59 Arader Jews in the army, amongst them 4 lieutenants, 3 captains, and 3 medical officers). Examples are:

the captains Bettelheim-Gajáry, Kohn-Pap, Kraus and the physicians Herzfeld, Morgenstein and Hirsch (\*100).

The fortress was occupied by the imperial troops, and during the siege laid by the revolutionary army there were heroic deeds by Jews (Ignác Schwartz, Samuel Chorin). The secretary-clerk of the community, Carol Rosenberg was killed on the street by an imperial officer, subsequent to his affirmative answer to the question if he is Jewish. Leopold, the son of Carol Rosenberg, started his prolific activity as secretary-clerk of the Jewish community of Arad after the death of his father (\*101).

In the end, the chamber of the representatives approved on July 28, 1849, the legislation promulgating the emancipation of the Jews, but it included only those who were born in Hungary, keeping out the immigrants. Likewise the establishing of the Jewish rabbinates was approved. Because of the further events, the legislation could not be implemented. As an immediate consequence of the revolutionary army's capitulation at Șiria (13 August, 1849), the Arad community was subjected to a collective fine of 30,000 forints, to be paid within 24 hours. The reason was the support given to the revolution. Moreover, amongst the people arrested were Leo Jajteles and the major Dallos-Singer, who were thrown into the jail of the Arad fortress.

\* \* \*

The number and the importance of the Jewish population did grow constantly until 1910. After that date there was stagnation, followed by a decrease after the end of the First World War. These changes were due to multiple factors: some of them external, like the modifications of the counties and districts, or the granting of the statute of municipality to Arad (1861). The internal factors were borne out of the changes in the criteria of the census and the conversions to Christian denominations, typical of the assimilating trend. Starting with the year 1870, the criteria for the registration of the population were the language and religion. There were separate lists drawn up for the city and for the county of Arad. It is to be noted that in 1851 there were 3418 Jews registered, in 1900 the number was close to 10000, while in 1910 it was 10010. Afterwards the tally decreased to 7811 (\*102). The most pronounced increase in the Jewish population was in the city of Arad. The percentage of the Jews in the city stayed more or less constant, at about 10-11% of the total population. Subsequent to the linking of Arad to the railroad net (1858) and the development of the new center stretching from the station to the Avram Iancu Plaza, there was a decrease of the concentration of Jewish habitations in the neighborhood of the synagogue.

Jews were registered in 16 villages of the county, mainly in Șimand, Pecica, Buteni, Șiria, Macea, Curtici and Sântana. In the Șiria district Pâncota had a significant number of Jews. The situation was similar in Sebiș, Ineu, Lipova, New-Arad, Vinga, Chișineu-Criș (\*103).

As far as other statistical data are concerned, there was an increase in the procentual representation of women in the population (\*104).

There were about 110-130 newborns every year, and 60-110 deaths (\*105). Comparing demographic data with other territorial-administrative divisions in the Banat and Transylvania, it is evident that the ratio of newborns/deaths was well balanced, somewhere in the middle of the rates. Due to the hygienic advancements, Arad had the lowest infant mortality rate in the whole of Transylvania in the year 1910. Nevertheless, in contrast to Maramureș, Satu Mare and other areas, there was no natural increase in the number of the Jews in Arad in the years 1910-1918. Arad was not a center of immigration from Galitzia, as such no increase in population came from that area. On the contrary there was emigration towards Budapest, Vienna and the United States (legal or illegal).

As far as the number of "active" people is concerned, approximately 60% of the Jewish population was productive, and about 50% of those were married. Approximately 17% of the active population was female. Amongst those active, the highest percentage (55%) were in commerce, a significant amount in manufacturing (38%), and some even (after 1867) in the agriculture (\*106).

A conspicuous contribution of the Jews in the local development of the economy was the introduction of the mechanization in agriculture and industry. A primordial role was played by the producing of alcohol with the help of the steam-engine (in the year 1851 there were 2 such plants owned by Jews in Arad) and the making of vinegar. After 1867, the Neumann factory produced daily 200 hectoliters of refined alcohol - the largest such enterprise in Central Europe. The plant of Paul Steinitzer in Mocrea (1863), was quite modern, producing cordials too. Cooking oil was made in Arad by Melchior Steiner, Adolf Chorin and Simon Reiter. The steam mill of the Neumanns was the most important one in the area. A large tannery in Arad was owned by Winkler. Heinrich Goldscheider set up the first typography in the city (1850), invested with the most modern typesetting (\*107). The first tool and die-making plant, owned by Carol Assael (1877), worked for other plants in Arad. Other factories owned by Jews in Arad were: the chemical (fertilizers) plant of the Singer brothers, the paper mill of Friedrich Pollák, the lumber mill of L. Czucker and Ludovic Strasser, the Schillinger oil press in Chișineu, the Behr mill in Pecica. The establishment of the Neumann textile mills in 1900, became the most

important technical accomplishment. Contemporary statistics bear out that many Jewish people were workers or clerks in those enterprises. Following the initiative of the rabbi Chorin, the technical schooling of young Jewish people was a positive accomplishment, nevertheless there was only a small proportion of Jewish workers in the industry (14%), while the number of administrative personnel was quite high (41%). After 1910, this percentage was declining, due to the emigration.

As far as trade is concerned, there were in Arad a number of wholesale companies with a continuity extending to successive generations (I.Spitzer, B.Haas, A.Adler, M.Braun, S.Schwarz, S.Birnfeld, L.Kneffel). An instance of a successful Jewish exporter was Josif Domán, a wine exporter who did receive a gold medal at an exposition in England in 1885. Paul Wallfish was a merchant who excelled in matters of the community; having an important share in banking activities too. There were similar performances by: Leopold Rosenberg, Wilhelm Winkler, Gerschon May, Sándor Halász, Károly Pollák and especially Tivadar Ottenberg (\*108).

In matters of insurance, Sándor Lendvai was representing a large insurance company from Budapest (\*109). The Chamber of Commerce and Industry was originated and managed by Jews: Paul Wallfish, Ferenc Grünwald, Tivadar Ottenberg, Ármin Éles (\*110).

As far as agriculture is concerned some Jews were landowners: Solomon Sternthal from Timisoara (with estates in Pil), Josif Schweyer, Ignác Gerhardt, etc. In the year 1910, there were 19 Jews registered in the city and county of Arad as leasers of agricultural domains (\*111). There were few Jews in the general administrative offices. The Jews were unwelcome in some executive positions and in the officer corps. Just before the First World War, there was only one Jew in a position of responsibility in the Arad County: Béla Hirsch was pretor, and later he became first pretor. Likewise Dr. Miksa Löwinger was chief of services at the Municipal Hospital.



**Dr. Miksa Löwinger**

At City Hall on the other hand, there were a number of elected Jewish councilmen: Károly Weisz, Kálman Institoris, Ferenc Sárkány, the physician in-chief Dr. Mor Tisch, the chief of the financial services Mor Steinhardt (\*112). 4-5% of the city employees were Jewish (\*113). 17% of the employees of the judiciary were Jewish (54 clerks of the court were Jewish). The sole Jewish judge was Dr. Leopold Ádler (\*114). In the group of the free professions, there were 50 trial lawyers in 1910 (\*115). The majority of the physicians were Jewish (\*116). Prominent names in the medical profession were: I. Schuster,

Sig-Chorin, M. Herzfeld, M. Tisch, M. Löwinger. A number of pharmacies were owned by Jews (I. Ring, Káin, Kesztenbaum, etc), employing a number of 12 pharmacists (\*117). Other intellectuals comprised actors like Gyula Gál, also 9 actors in the company of Mihály Szendrei (himself being Jewish too), the newspapermen Leo Jajteles, Wilhelm Pettelheim, Josif Vészi, Josif Stauber. István Szöllösi was the general secretary of the Kölcsey Society.

In 1910, in the city and the county of Arad, there were 133 Jewish intellectuals (only 17 females), and a large number of Jews in the free professions representing 6% of the general population (\*118). As far as public life is concerned, despite the fact that until 1867, the Jews had no voting rights, some were elected on a local level as judicial assessors: Paul Wallfish, Heinrich Blau, as well as local representatives: the chief rabbi Steinhardt, Illés Schuster, János Tedeschi, Jakob Winkler, F. Mittelman, H. Goldscheider (\*119).

It was only in 1867 that the discriminatory practices against the Jews were finally abrogated by the Chamber of Deputies, opening thus the road to progress. Some of the Jews were active on the local political scene: Ferenc Chorin (1842-1925) was a representative, as well as the lawyers Sándor Nagy and Zsigmond Nemes (\*120). Important trade and manufacturing personalities, like Adolf Ádler and the Neumann family, received nobility titles. The chief rabbi Sándor Rosenberg, Mor Steinhardt - the son of the rabbi Jakob Steinhardt - and Ferenc Sárkány, were city councilmen for a long period of time (\*121).

Finally there are some considerations on how the Jewish communities functioned in the city and county of Arad, under the Habsburgic and Austro-Hungarian administration.

The community of Arad did enjoy some of the limited civic freedoms granted to Jews by the local and governmental authorities. Starting in 1861, a democratic statute was set up, introduced by the delegate of the community, Paul Wallfish, to the congress of Jewish leaders in Pest (\*122). Paul Wallfish and Ignác Deutsch did formulate and the rabbi Steinhardt did support the demands presented to the above mentioned assembly (December 14, 1868 - February 23, 1869). The two main points at stake were: the creation of a representative organ able to stand up for the Jewish interests and the establishment of a rabbinical school. The project of the communal organization did encompass the general electoral franchise, the election of the leadership, the periods and validity of the mandates in the specific territories, the duties of the rabbi and the staff of the synagogue. Only in 1902 was the statute of the community of Arad finally adjusted, in the framework of regulating the general situation of the Jews. The main effort of the community was directed towards the acceptance of the mosaic religion as autonomous and equal with the other denominations (\*123). The law decreeing the religious autonomy was voted

only in 1895 after numerous tribulations. The law was not enacted in fact, due to the lack of funds for the synagogal institutions. Additionally, as far back as 1860, a certain number of conservatively oriented faithful, tried to cleave off from the community and create a separate orthodox community. It was only as late as 1906, that the Ministry of the Faiths, approved an orthodox "praying association".



## **Chapter 7**

### **The Jewish People of Arad in the Period between the Two World Wars (1918-1940)**

#### **A. The Jews of Arad in the Unified Romania**

The map of Central and Eastern Europe was revamped after the victory of the Allied Powers in the First World War (1914-1918), affecting considerably the Jewish communities in Arad. The Jews in Arad were suddenly faced with a radically changed situation. The peace treaties of Saint Germain and Trianon abolished the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Arad was integrated into the united Romania. A substantial segment of the economy in Arad was in the hand of the Jews and they had to adjust to the brand-new status. The most important advantage was the weakening of the competition due to the breach with Hungary and mainly with Budapest. There were numerous disadvantages though, such as carrying on with unfamiliar authorities, or the new standing of Arad as a frontier city. The socio-cultural aspects of the Jewish communal existence were to undergo a major transformation. Originally the Jews were rooted in the German language and culture, but during the XIX-th and XX-th centuries they tried to accommodate to the environment, the more that the moderately liberal rule of the Budapest authorities steered the Jewish community towards integration into the Hungarian society. As indicated in the previous chapters numerous Jews distinguished themselves in the economic, social and cultural fields, as well as in the artistic life of the city. These Jews were educated in Hungarian schools, they worked with Hungarian authorities, in fact they were Hungarians of the Mosaic creed. The 200-th anniversary of the Jewish presence in 1917, was carried out with displays of loyalty to the Austro-Hungarian State.

The Jews of Arad, suffered big losses in human life in the years 1914-1918, due to the First World War.

#### **The roster of the war heroes from Arad (\*124)**

**Dr. Imre Adler**

**Lipot Berkovits**

**Dr. Rezső Boros**

**Miksa Brasch**

**Dezső Braun**

**Zsigmond Breitbart**

**Sándor Ecker**

**Imre Engel**

Jenő Engel  
Sándor Engländer  
Richárd Fischer  
István Fuchs  
Andor Glück  
Mano Gottlieb  
Sándor Groszman  
József Grün  
Lajos Hahn  
Sámuel Hammer  
Norbert Heller  
Ervin Hervai  
Mihály Hirsch  
Lipót Hoffman  
Imre Holló  
Vilmos Jakobovits  
Henrik Jónap  
Árpád Juhász  
Jenő Kaufmann  
Sándor Kaufmann  
Zoltán Kellner  
Sándor Koch  
Sándor László  
Zoltán Ligeti-Hugo  
Samu Markovits  
Fülöp Merkler  
Sándor Merkler  
Oszkár Neumann  
Ernö Pető  
Jenő Radnai  
János Rippner  
Dénes Rosenfeld  
Henrik Scheibel  
Dr. János Singer  
Béla Szabados  
Emil Vajda  
Sándor Waldman  
Jenő Weisz  
Artur Wittenberger  
Zsigmond Wolf

In the united Romania, at least temporarily, there was a continuation in the unfolding of the socio-economic advances initiated during the Austro-Hungarian period. The changes started with the stipulations of the new Supervisory Council of Transylvania, and afterwards with the new Constitution in 1923. From the political point of view there was the inception of the new, united Romanian nation and the assertion of a new leadership elite, created either by immigration from the Old Kingdom or from the local cadres. The agrarian reform had far more effects in the rural setting than in the economical life or the cities. One of the results was that some village-dweller Jews moved to the cities, while others took the path of emigration, mostly to America. The statistical data of those years indicate a stable balance in the number of Jews in the city and county of Arad, despite the upshot of the first wave of immigration of Polish and Ukrainian Jews, as well as of those from Maramureș, some of them fleeing the atrocities and pogroms. Most of them settled in the "Serbian Hamlet", establishing it as the Jewish quarter of Arad.

**The number of Jews in the city and county of Arad**

	Census of 1910	Census of 1930
The city of Arad:	6295	7811
The villages in the Arad County:	4582	2673
Total for city and county:	10877	10484

**B. The Jews of Arad, and the beginning of the National Movement in the Years 1918-1926**

There was a need to adjust to the novel social-political realities emerging from the new affiliation with the young Romanian nation, including the requirement to learn the language. The Jews educated in the spirit of belonging to the Hungarian nation, were reticent to accept this. A number of people even decided to leave their ancestral religion. This trend was stronger in Arad, than in the other communities of Transylvania and the Banat. In the years 1920-21, just in the course of a couple of months, 70 Jews did convert, including some well known, reputable personalities (\*125). There is a publication issued by the World Jewish Congress, "Figures in the Jewish population - statistical memento 1945", which analyzes the figures of the 1942 census of the Jews. Herein it is found, that in the year 1942 in Arad, 9472 citizens were considered to be Jews as defined by the racial legislation. Out of these 408 had been baptized, and there were 538 mixed marriages, representing 23% of the total number of matrimonials. These figures corroborate that Arad had the highest such percentage amongst all of the Romanian cities. At any rate,

after 1918, there was a slowdown in the trend of pro-Hungarian assimilation. This was due to the disintegration of the Austro-Hungarian state, and the emergence of an ultra nationalist, even racist anti-Semitism, emanating from the extreme right-wing Hungarian cliques during the first years of the Miklos Horthy regime. Numerous Jews, who previously considered themselves to be faithful sons and daughters of the Hungarian motherland, were startled and pained to recognize that this is a fallacy. Only those of the "Hungarian race" were able to maintain their Hungarian citizenship, meaning that the Jewish-born people were excluded. A telling example was what happened to the physician Dr. Ștefan Fényes, who on September 10, 1920, was rejected from a train loaded with refugees on its way to Budapest (\*126).

It was not by chance that the above described regression coincided with the gradual growth of the contemporary Jewish national movement. The swelling of the Jewish national awareness was enhanced by the impetus of the national emancipation in Europe, as well as by the new anti-Jewish assaults and even pogroms in the Ukraine and Poland.

In Transylvania and the Banat the Jewish longing for national liberation was expressed on the occasion of the major popular gatherings of the Jews of Timișoara and Cluj, in October 1918. There, for the first time the national emancipation and the Jewish solidarity with the Zionist ideals were proclaimed. These manifestations were followed by the birth of the **Jewish National Union** of Transylvania and the Banat.

Gradually Zionist organizations were brought forth, first in Cluj, then in Timișoara, and later in Arad. The pioneers of the Zionist movement in Transylvania and the Banat were Dr. Joan Ronai in Alba Iulia, the rabbis Alexandru Jordan from Făgăraș and Moses Samuel Glasner from Cluj, as well as Dr. Chaim Weissburg from the same city, and Alexandru Marmorek in Timișoara. Youth organizations were started with the goal of preparing the members for emigration. In Cluj a network of schools called Tarbut, was set up with the goal of molding and educating the young. In December 1918, the semiweekly - and later daily "Uj Kelet" - made its appearance, under the redaction of Dr. Ernest Márton, a militant Zionist. This newspaper, as well as the "Uj Kor" in Timișoara, became the main ideological agent of the Zionist movement in Transylvania and the Banat until 1940, when the Northern half of Transylvania was ceded to Horthyst Hungary, and the paper was banned.

With the passage of time the national movement expanded into other urban centers and even into some of the neighboring communes. Arad was also receptive to the ideas of the national awakening.

The turning point came on January 5, 1920. Three Jewish delegates - Dr. Eugen Singer, Iosif Kalmár and Maxim (Miksa) König - were received by the under prefect Romulus Veliciu. That trio represented "The launching committee", thrusting towards the establishment of the local affiliate of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and the Banat (\*127). Being received in a friendly and understanding manner by the local Romanian authorities, this committee organized on April 15, 1920, the festive constituting assembly of the Arad chapter of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and the Banat. Dr. Eugen Singer was elected president, and Josif Kalmár vice-president. Together with Henrik Szenes and Henrik Polacsek (from Gurahont), they did participate at the first regional conference of the Union in 1920 in Cluj (\*128). The regional conference in 1922 was hosted by Arad, and the opening ceremony took place in the grand hall of the Cultural Palace. This event did awaken the national feelings of many local people, and showed the path to many youngsters.

The first deed of the new committee was to enroll in the "Shekel action", meaning financial contributions towards the world Zionist movement, and bestowing a voting voice onto the Zionist divisions. They were about 350 shekel contributors. A number of orthodox Jews did join the movement. One after the other, the associations Aviva-Barissia, Noar-Hazioni, Shomer Hatzair, the Hakoah sports club and the women's Wizo, did emerge in Arad.

The first confrontation between the young Zionist activists and those favoring assimilation occurred on October 5, 1920, within the framework of the leadership of the occidental rites community. The issue was the question whether the Jews are a nation (the opinion of Kalmár and Dr. Singer) or just a denomination (the position of Dr. Henrik Schütz, the president of the community). The editorial of the "Uj Kelet" No. 73, October 6, 1920 - issued on the following day - running under the title "The lessons from Arad", reflects on this conflict, the paper insisting on the need to enhance the cultural education of the Jews in Arad. The matter did continue to evoke disagreements during the following years too. Henrik Schütz (he continued to be the president of the community until 1936) gave an interview to the paper "Aradi Közlöny" on October 5, 1921, where he persisted on regarding the Jews to be just a faith, alleging that "the Jews in Arad consider themselves to be Hungarians". At that time both the chief rabbi of Arad, Dr. L. Vágvolgyi, as well as his counterpart from Oradea the neologue chief rabbi L. Kecskeméti, held similar opinions (\*129).

Despite being in the minority, the Zionist activists carried on vigorously in various ways. In Cluj, in December of 1921, four Zionists from Arad (Kallos, Kalmár, Szenes, Berkovics), did participate at the foundation of the Tarbut

Society in Cluj, intended to the propagate Zionist culture and education. Josif Kalmár was present at the establishing of the "Hagibor" sports club in Cluj.

During the period 1920-30, the growth of the national ideas was faster in the rural communities in the neighborhood of Arad - Ineu, Gurahonț, Chișineu-Criș, Pecica, Nădlac, Buteni, Pâncota - than in Arad proper. In the whole of Transylvania and the Banat, the tally of "shekel contributors" for Keren Haiesod in 1925, was the highest in Ineu and Gurahonț. This fact was reflected also in the number of delegates to the regional conference of the Jewish National Union in Transylvania and the Banat. After the years 1920-21, there was no substantial advancement of Zionism in Arad proper. The number of "Shekel contributors" was constant and it did stay on a moderate level. There was no echo to the emigration (alya) movement, or of the setting up of agricultural colonies (the halutz movement). Thus in the year 1925, from the whole of Transylvania and the Banat, 243 certificates of immigration to Palestine were issued, 176 of those being originated through the Zionist organizations. Out of this total only 6 were issued for persons from Arad (\*130). The Hitachdut Aviva and Barisia, Zionist youth organizations, had no reverberation in Arad. The change occurred only after 1930, with the return from Vienna of the ardent Zionist Herman Chilewitz. There were no candidates for the Halutz movement, and as such the mainstream Zionists, called "liberals", directed their attention to the creation of Jewish settlements in the area between Haifa and Acco (Lemaan Acco), which resulted in the "Tzur Shalom" engagement.

### **C. Analyzing the Correlation between the Socio-Politic Situation in Romania in the Years 1920-30 and the Jewish National Movement**

Within a short period of time after the end of the war, the course of the economy was almost back to a normal situation. The political situation though was completely different, especially in respect to the national minorities. The principles heralded in the Alba Iulia Proclamation, as well as the resolutions of the 1923 Constitution, were nothing but declarations of goodwill. Thus, the minorities instead of being integrated in a democratic fashion, were exposed to a campaign of slighting and intimidation. There were fascist movements, mostly in the Universities of Cluj and Timișoara, steeped in hooliganism and anti-Semitism, and they were tolerated and even encouraged by the authorities. The newspaper Uj Kelet was 3 times target of vandalism until the year 1926, and it had to temporarily suspend its apparition. The Jewish youngsters, frightened and terrorized, started to forsake the Romanian universities. Thus during the decade 1920-30, the number of Jewish students enrolled in the Cluj University, decreased from 26% to only 5.8% of the total (\*131). The Jewish students, desiring to avoid the hooliganic acts, asked for the help from the communities,

in order to pursue their studies abroad. The restrictions imposed on the pursuit of higher studies went parallel with the tendency of pushing the Jews out of public service and the free professions. The hooliganism created an atmosphere of insecurity, having a negative influence on the optimal advancement of the economy in the commerce, manufacturing and industry.

All the above were significantly aggravated by the massive economic crisis of the years 1929-33. The agrarian setback did affect some of the urban Jews (the owners of financial institutions) but it impacted mostly on the rural population. There was a significant increase in taxation on the trade with agricultural produce, levied especially on Jewish merchants who frequently became bankrupted. The peasants were advised that the government will impose a conversion (a partial amnesty on paying the debts), and they stopped their payments to the banks. There was a significant increase in unemployment. In this situation a number of politicians who started out with democratic intents (Octavian Goga, Alexandru Vaida Voievod) began to express ideas about elimination of the minorities, and especially of the Jews, both from the public domain and a number of professions. All the propositions were restrictive, and sported the denominations of "numerus Valahicus", "numerus clausus" or even "numerus nullus" (meaning the exclusion of minorities, but targeting specifically the Jews, from education and the workplaces).

In Transylvania and the Banat, the calamitous economic situation induced the spreading of the ideas of the "Halutz Movement", meaning the emigration and agricultural colonization in Eretz Israel. The first halutz colonies for agricultural training (hakshara) were born. The first kibbutz originated by Transylvanians (from Cluj) in Palestine was Kfar Gideon - near Afula - but it did not succeed. Other kibbutzim constituted by the Aviva-Barissia (later called Dror Habonim) like the one adjoining Gedera, and especially the one near Kfar Saba, set up by the Shomer Hatzair, had far better outcomes.

### **The Tzur-Shalom Crisis and the Strengthening of the Jewish National Movement in the Years 1929-36**

The onsets of the previously mentioned Tzur Shalom project of establishing a community in the Haifa Bay, were likewise rooted in Arad. A large percentage of the participants and of the invested funds came from the Zionist organization of Arad (the promoters of the deed were Dr. Eugen Singer and Henrik Szenes), and as such Arad was for an extended period the headquarters of the Tzur Shalom Cooperative. The failure of the venture was due to many motives.

The first difficulties arose, when the Haifa Bay Company ran into bankruptcy in 1926 and was not able to face its commitments. This happened after they have accepted a large down-payment from the Tzur Shalom Cooperative for the worth of the tracts. Tzur Shalom was finally able to obtain the tracts from the Keren Kayemet, but it turned out that the lots are on a marshy terrain. In the initial offering, there were no financial provisions for drainage, and after prolonged haggling with the Keren Kayemet, an other smaller division was proffered, although this agreement was never implemented (\*132).

At that stage, the conflict started to have negative repercussions on the whole national Jewish movement in Transylvania and the Banat, affecting first of all Arad. On the occasion of the 9-th conference of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and the Banat, the delegates from Arad (Dr. Eugen Singer and Henrik Szenes), asked for the cessation of collecting funds for the Keren Kayemet, until the situation of the real estate owed to the cooperative is clarified. This request was rebutted through a majority vote (\*133). The discontent created by the Tzur Shalom affair resulted in a significant lowering of the number of shekel-contributors in Arad - the lowest tally being attained in the year 1931. The Tzur Shalom matter ceased to affect the development of the Zionist movement in Arad and the surroundings, only in the mid-thirties, when the seat of the Tzur Shalom Cooperative was moved from Arad to Haifa.

In the aftermath of some well-organized and fervent initiatives, a significant improvement occurred in the years 1932-36. It was due to the drive of Hermann Chilewitz, a remarkable character. He had pursued his higher studies in Vienna, where he acquired a sound experience in Zionist activity, and he set out to build the firm foundation of the **Habonim** (of late the Aviva-Barissia), a Zionist youth organization. Habonim was not involved in the futile ideological warfare (so prevalent in the worldwide Zionist movement), and as such it spread out in the whole of Transylvania and the Banat, including the city of Arad. There were diverse activities oriented to attract young people: cultural evenings, occasionally cosponsored with the WIZO, the social gatherings either at their own location or at the site rented from the Hakoah sports association, the launching of a library endowed with 1500 tomes - aided by the veteran Zionist Maxim (Miksa) König - where the classic titles of the Zionist luminaries were well represented, joining in the Shekel action to benefit the Keren Kayemet and Keren Hayesod associations, sports activities, etc. Hermann Chilewitz came from the orthodox community, as such he was aware of the need to enlist the young religious people in the exercise of Zionism. He successfully initiated in Arad the local **Mizrahi** youth organization. Its first chairman was Elemér Neuländer. Members of the leadership were: Baruch Stauber, Fischel Fischer, Simon Schapira, Bumi and Chilku Nissel - new

participants. As far as organizational and ideological problems were concerned, Habonim had a pragmatic approach: it succeeded in the short span of 2 years to forge a body of 24 activists. Apart from Hermann Chilewitz, the most prominent personalities were: Filip Huppert, Ștefan (Avram) Krausz (later active for a prolonged period in the leadership of the orthodox community), Moshe Klein, Joan Benedek and Dr. Ladislau Háber - the later becoming a central figure of the Zionist movement in Arad after the Second World War. On the occasion of the 1939 Zionist balloting in Arad, 42% of the voters opted for the delegates of the Habonim (\*134). There was an exemplary collaboration with the other Zionist youth organizations - Mizrahi, Hanoar Hazioni. In the year 1938, the local office of the "**Gordonia**" organization was set up by Ezra Horesch (Lasner), together with other members of the "Tora Umlacha" and "Habonim", as well as with the assistance of the slihim (emissaries) Meir Zaid and Shoshana Kagan (\*135).

Ezra Lasner was born in Timișoara, and concluded his high school studies in Arad. Influenced by Mordechai Rössel, he became a Zionist at the tender age of 15, and started his activity in the "Tora Umlacha" Zionist organization. Other members of the local Gordonia were: Efraim (Béla) Mandel, Jehuda Hammer and his future spouse Piri, the Steiner sisters, Gizela Reich, Fáni Rosenwasser (a gymnast at the Hakoah), Edith Stauber, Shlomo Levi, Gheorghe Pilisi, etc.

A genuine pioneer of the Zionist movement in Arad was the gifted writer and media-person Mordechai Rössel (he will be referred to in a later chapter concerned with cultural personalities). Under his guidance a number of young people from Arad enrolled in the Zionist movement within the "Tora Umlacha", and later on, some of those emerged as leaders of the Dror Habonim, Mizrahi and especially Gordonia organizations.

The women's organization, the WIZO, had an important role during this period of upswing of the Jewish national movement in Arad. Launched in 1929 by the physician and writer Dr. Maxim (Miksa) Kupfer (his pen name was Raffi Adam), the local WIZO did attract widespread attention. In the November 2, 1935, issue of the Uj Kelet newspaper, # 245, a report praised the chairperson of the organization, Mrs. Helén Grosz, who managed to effectively combine the charitable activities with the Zionist ones. The WIZO was constituted on May 2, 1929, with an initial membership of 30 women, and within a couple of years, assisted by the experienced Timișoara chapter, it did reach a number of 120 members. Amongst the active members we do mention the ladies Anhalzer (for an extended period the chairperson), Ana Goldschmidt (the spouse of the well-known pediatrician Dr. Leopold Goldschmidt), Gara (the spouse of Dr. Ármin Gara, active in community and Zionist matters), Böske Köves, Dohány, Fuksz,

Dr. Rényi, Hönigsberg, Rothschild, Miriam Hallerstein, Elly Adler and Magda Weiszberger (for many years the chairperson of the Arad WIZO organization, and later the chairperson of the Hungarian chapter in Israel). Affiliates were organized in Nădlac, Chişineu Criş, and other villages too. The above mentioned volunteers were responsible for the success of the bazaar in 1931.

Up to 1931, the Jewish people of Romania, tried to have their interests secured and their grievances redressed by joining the electoral rolls of the different Romanian parties (the Liberals of the "Old Kingdom", the National Party and later the National Peasants Party of Transylvania and the Banat). The Romanian politicians appeared to be lax in safeguarding the principles of democracy, and it became necessary to create an independent political league. Thus the **Jewish Party** was constituted. In the 1931, 1932 and 1937 elections, this party managed to obtain 4-6 seats in the Parliament.

Despite the continuing divergences within the occidental rites community of Arad, the Zionists and their allies strove to uphold the Jewish unity. During the electoral campaigns of the thirties, the meetings of the Jewish Party raised passionate interest within both the occidental rites and the orthodox communities. A personality who was always highly popular and at the head of the roll, was Iltői Ádler Tibor. Several circles close to the Hungarian Party reacted in a negative way, trying to discourage the Jews from creating their own party, but there was no significant response. The figures quoted from contemporary newspapers are demonstrating an appropriate and relatively high level of votes cast for the Jewish Party (\*136):

The election year and the county cast	The number of votes in Arad for the Jewish Party:
1931	1378
1932	1387
1933	1146
1937	1238

The electoral legislation of that period was restrictive, the number of enfranchised Jews was never above 2000-2500, and a certain percentage (30%) never voted; as such it can be stated that about 70% of the Jewish voters were supporting the Jewish Party.

As a consequence of the positive developments in Arad, the pro-Zionist activities of the Jewish National Union came around during the thirties. In the years 1930-35, the local league of the Union was reinvigorated with Zionists hailing from a new generation or coming from the youth organizations (Dr. Alexander Herzog, Hermann Chilewitz, Dr. Alexander Dohány, Eugen Princz).

The well-coordinated work of the Zionist associations and other related Jewish organizations, did engender a progressive increase of the shekel contributors from 96 in 1931-32 to 304 in 1934-35. Mrs. Dohány was particularly successful in collecting funds for the Keren Kayemet and Keren Hayesod.

The majority of the leadership of the occidental rites community with Dr. Henrik Schütz as its chairman, continued to have a "neutral" attitude towards the ideas of national affirmation and Zionism proper. This anachronism became evident by the growth of the national sentiments in the first half of the third decade. The absurd stance did culminate in the refusal of Dr. Schütz to receive Nahum Sokolov, the president of the Zionist World Organization (\*137), on the occasion of his visit to Arad in January of 1930. This engendered protests by a number of Jews in Arad, there was even a proposition of no confidence, refuted by the leadership of the community with 17 votes against 7 (\*138). This momentary settling of the crisis in the leadership of the occidental rites community, could not conceal the discrepancy between the penchants and longings of the Jewish populace and the congealed posture of some of the communal leaders.

The advent of the Hitler regime in January of 1933 was associated with a general increase of anti-Semitism in Europe and in particular in Romania. This strengthened the desire of national self-affirmation amongst the Jews of Arad, aiming at the mastering of the modern Hebrew language (Ivrit). In this context there was a revival of the "linguistic" discussion at the school board in Arad in the year 1933, but in fact this became one of the facets of the communal political orientation. At the school board meeting on September 10, 1933, Dr. Henrik Schütz, who was likewise vice-president of the board, proposed to eliminate some aspects of teaching the Hebrew language from the religious instruction. This proposition elicited an antagonistic discussion, wherein Dr. L. Vágvölgyi, the chief rabbi of the community, supported the proposition of Dr. Schütz, as opposed by Dr. Jacob Keppich, the chairman of the school board, who submitted that the Hebrew language should be a required topic in the curriculum. The decision was adjourned until the November 12, 1933 meeting of the board. On that date further discussions were concluded with the acceptance of a compromise proposition by Mr. Alexandru Bornstein, making the Hebrew an optional subject, depending on the wishes of the parents. The Jewish National Union of Transylvania and the local chapter of the WIZO, did intervene in the deliberations, offering even to find instructors, teaching materials and potential sources of financing, nevertheless the decision of the school board was not commuted (\*139)

The preferential support that ought to have been given to the Hakoah sports club, was not forthcoming from most of the leadership of the community. Some of them openly confessed to be partial to the Amefa sports club.

#### **D. The Turning Point in the Spring of 1936, and the Upswing of the Jewish National Movement in the Public Awareness (1936-1940)**

In the beginning of 1936, the president of the board of the occidental rites community Dr. Henrik Schütz, did realize that in order to be effective in the altered circumstances, the leadership needs a revitalization. As such he tendered his resignation, retaining the title of honorary president for life. Aladár Lakatos was elected to be the new president. His candidature was supported by those who were close to the ideas of the Jewish national movement, and he was backed by and got help from many activists within the circle of Dr. Schütz.

Those times required a definite attitude concerning the national identity. The circumstances of the Jews were about to deteriorate due to the prevailing general political atmosphere. During the liberal regime of the Tătărescu government (1934-1937), the markedly anti-Semitic hooliganism of the students in Cluj and Timișoara was increasingly tolerated by the police, who kept their distance from any incident. The Legionary Party of Corneliu Zelea-Codreanu, which was suspended for only 3 months, reappeared under the name “All For The Country”, and continued its activity undisturbed. The end of 1937 marked the onset of the Goga-Cuza government, the first one with an open anti-Semitic program. The first decrees did harass primarily the rural Jewish population.

That government initiated the so-called “citizenship revision” law patently aimed against the Jews. It invalidated the Romanian citizenship of about 225,000 Jews under different pretexts. Even after the downfall of the Goga-Cuza government, the successive regimes did abide by this legislation, which had ostensibly upset the financial situation of a large number of Jews.

The worsening of the situation in Romania and the imminent growth of the Hitlerist menace, called for a shift in the education of the Jewish youth, a preparedness for emigration (hakshara) and alyah into Eretz Israel. In order to face the professional, cultural and educational demands, the new leadership of the community (under the presidency of Aladár Lakatos), launched a progressive assessment of the people in the community, and a boost in charitable actions, encouraging donations from the well-to-do members. As such in the year 1937, 850 benefactors gave lei 827,000, out of which lei 183,000 was spent on assisting the needy during the wintertime, lei 180,000 went for medicaments and 97,000 to the Charity House (\*140).

There was a significant shift in the cultural-educational Zionist activity performed previously by the WIZO. The hitherto paltry group of Zionists, did grow fast under the tireless guidance of Dr. Ármin Gara, soon exceeding the membership of 600. There were weekly deliberations and various educational programs. All the Zionist youth organizations, like Dror Habonim, Gordonia, Hanoar Hazioni, prospered. There was a spectacular rise in the contributions for the Keren Kayemet and Keren Hayesod funds. The “Bitaron” action, a solidarity manifestation with Palestinian yishuv sorely tried by the religious disturbances in 1936, was quite a success (\*141).

The Zionist organizations, directed their activity preferentially towards the professional preparation for Eretz Israel (hakshara). In the “Mas Histadrut” action, it was projected that 70% of the contributions will be channeled towards the “hakshara”. In Arad concrete initiatives were undertaken. The Dror Habonim and the Mizrahi (\*142), both did set up a farm (one in the Hațeg area, the other in the Arad Podgoria) each taking on 15 youth. The Gordonia organization initiated a horticultural garden (on a plot close to the fortress) while the Noar Hazioni originated an atelier for pursuing different trades.

As a consequence of the modified outlook within the occidental rites community of Arad, the chief rabbi, Dr. Vágvölgyi, did alter his attitude toward the Jewish national movement. He started to side with the pro-Zionist activities, and had a considerable contribution towards the success of the actions supporting the Keren Hayesod. In the year 1939, under the impetus of the young associate chief rabbi Dr. Schönfeld, the Jewish community started to put out a publication dealing with matters of direct actuality: the Hitlerite peril, the need to reinforce the national consciousness, reeducation in preparation for the aliya, etc.

The year 1939 saw the last elections in Zionist matters, and the selecting of the delegation to the 21-t World Zionist Congress. The Uj Kelet newspaper published the statistics: out of 718 shekel contributors, 363 did participate in this ballot with the following results: 153 votes for Dror Habonim, 68 for Gordonia, 74 for Noar Hatzioni (close to the Liberal Zionist bloc), and 48 votes for the Mizrahi (religious - moderates) (\*143). At the Dror Habonim congress of June 1939 (the last one to be held within legal conditions) in Cluj, reports concerning the problems of hachsara, were presented by the two delegates from Arad.

In the first years of the third decade, the local chapter “Or” of the **Bnai Brith** organization started to gain momentum. Dr. Eugen Fisher and Iltői Ádler Tibor, were nationally known activists who did initiate the Bnai Brith in Arad. Soon it involved over fifty persons, some of them the most active ones in the public life, both from the occidental rites and the orthodox communities. The

former chief-rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld asserted in a statement, that the growth of the national movement within the ranks of the Arad Jews, would not have been conceivable without the activity of the Bnei Brith organization. It is a significant fact that the personalities linked to public life of Arad in the thirties, like Alexandru Herzog, Dr. Ladislau Háber, Aladár Lakatos, Stefan Krausz, Eugen Wiesel, etc. were all of them, members of the “Or” chapter. The center of the Bnai Brith organization of Transylvania was in Cluj, until it was banned by the Goga-Cuza government in 1937.

### **E. The Activities of the “Hakoah” Sports Association (1921-1940)**

On December 4, 1921, (\*144), the local “Hakoah” sports club was born in Arad, modeled after the Viennese sports association “Hakoah” (from the Hebrew “The Power”).

The first president of the club was Josif Kalmár, elected on the occasion of a festive assembly, with the participation of Jews from all social classes. The following sport disciplines were initially practiced: athletics, gymnastics, football, swimming, fencing and wrestling. The effects were gratifying from the very beginning, partly due to the results themselves, but also due to the merit of the participation of Arad at the football and gymnastics tournament held in honor of the 2-d Congress of the Jewish National Union of Transylvania and the Banat. Unfortunately these pleasing outcomes were short-lived. The financial underpinnings of the club were neglected by most Jewish individuals.. As such the football division was not able to satisfy the demands of various professional players, who did return to Budapest. The only significant episode in those years was the 2-d placement of the gifted athlete Emeric Steinfeld at the 100-200 meter sprint events, on the occasion of the European Athletic competition in Prague.

The reorganization of the club (in 1928), and the installation of a competent new president in the person of the zealous Dr. Béla Salamon, brought forth a turn to the better in the activities of the sports association. At the invitation of Hermann Chilewitz, Dr. Salamon did come over from Cluj, where he was the secretary of the Hagibor club, and he succeeded in a short time to reactivate the existing sports divisions, and introduce new activities. With the collaboration of an enthusiastic group including Desideriu Grieshaber, the brethren Deutsch, Marti Engel, Francisc Bercovici, etc. proper headquarters were rented in the heart of the city, intended also as a future meeting place for the Jewish youth. The following activities of the club were noteworthy:

**Swimming.** The most prominent members of the division were: Dondo Jávör, Ladislau Schulhoff, Ioan Rácz, Pista Grünwald, Mannheim, Holländer,

Gheorghe Markovics. In the year 1924 they did participate at the first Maccabi Games held in Transylvania. Susanna Reis did qualify in the 3-d place.

**Gymnastics.** The first significant results did appear only in 1938, in Resița, at the National Championship, where the team composed of Fáni Rosenwaser, Gizi Szabo, Eliza Roth and Elza Pollák did win the first place. Amongst the men Hoffmann, Dávidovics, Török should be mentioned. In the year 1932 they managed to enroll 40 religious young people. Amongst the more mature ones, Josif Rosenwasser and Eugen Nissel (Chilku) were prominent, and later they advanced into the primary team. In the year 1933, there was an affair in the courtyard of the Jewish School, where the leaders of the orthodox communities were also present, including the chief rabbi Joachim Schreiber. All of them were enthralled by the demonstration given by the little “bochers” carrying out the drills on demanding equipment.

**Boxing.** The boxers Zoltán Krausz, Heinrich Simon, Desideriu Dascal, etc. trained under the supervision of Andrei Schulhoff, the head of the division. Zoltán Krausz did win the championship of the Banat, in the heavyweight class.

**Athletics.** After the exceptional result of the athlete Emeric Steinfeld in Prague, there were no remarkable sequels. The one item worth mentioning was the first placement in the 100 meter sprint and mixed relay of the sportsmen from Arad participating at the Maccabi Games organized in Transylvania.

**Wrestling.** The name of Hermann Grossmann is worth mentioning, he became later trainer and referee. He was also the coach of the national team.

**Ping Pong.** From the first year of its inception the division had over 70 players. A special attention has to be focused on the two athletes who brought international renown to that chapter.

a). Boriska Feiner Salamon did excel amidst the women. In 1932 she did win the National Championship in the individual, women’s double and mixed doubles (with Moshe Glanz). She kept her title of national champion for 5 years, until 1936. Boriska was a participant in the Romanian sports delegation at the 2-d Maccabi Games, held in Tel Aviv in 1935. She was the only one of the team to win two titles: single women and mixed doubles.

b). Moshe Glanz (Zohar) did stand out amidst the men. In 1932, at the tender age of 15, Maishi did win the National Junior Championship, keeping this title for 3 years. In the course of his sports activity, he won homage to the Romanian pennant, being part of the national team in the years 1936-38. He was a multifaceted sportsman, a consummate athlete and a much valued football player. After the second World War, when the Hakoah changed its name to Sparta, he became the secretary of this Zionist sports organization. In the sports almanac of 1948, there was a praising text together with his photograph,

labeling “the little Glanz” as a leading sportsman to be emulated by everyone. In the year 1949 he arrived to Israel and settled in Haifa. He became the administrator in charge of the sports instruction in the schools of the Haifa-Hadera area, supervising the sports activity of 1500 pupils in about 150 schools. He was highly regarded by all, be it his pupils, the teachers and the higher-ups.

**Football.** The team started its activity in the municipal competition. As of 1945, under the name of Sparta, they did participate in the national championship, the B league, until 1948. The trainer of the team was Shobi Schwartz, previously a player in the national team of Romania, the only Jewish player ever to be included in that companionship.

Beside the Hakoah and later Sparta sports club, there was another sports association, both before and after the war, the Amefa. It is to be mentioned, mainly because numerous Jews in Arad were its supporters. Some even were elected to the leadership of that club, for instance Alexandru Markovits, was its president.

A special mention should be made of a multifaceted sportsman, Ladislau Glück (Laczi bácsi), well-known by all young people involved in sports, and also a much valued tourist guide.



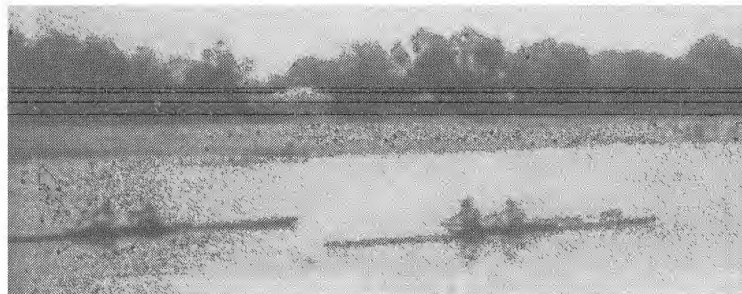
Jewish boy scouts in 1923. In the first row: Zoli Kohn, Jenő Plath, Hermann Chilewitz - Zsiga Weiszberger, Péter Horvath, Imre Merkszamer, Dr. Sándor Herzog, - Samu Arnstein



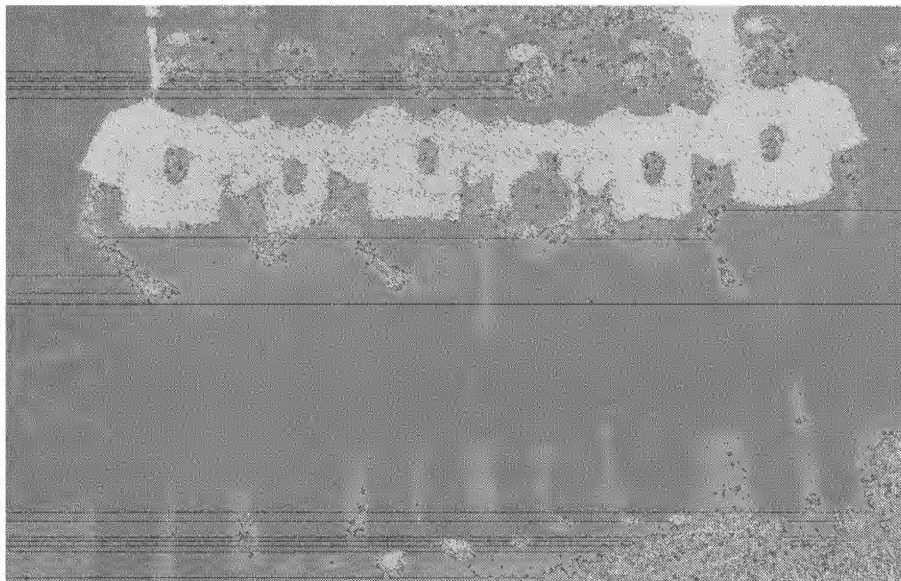
The football team of the "Hakoah" club



The football team



Rowing in doubles. Glanz Bandi and Hoffmann Pista



The Ping-Pong team. From the left: Frommer, Bernat, Glanz M., Fischer, Prokopetz



Moshe Glancz



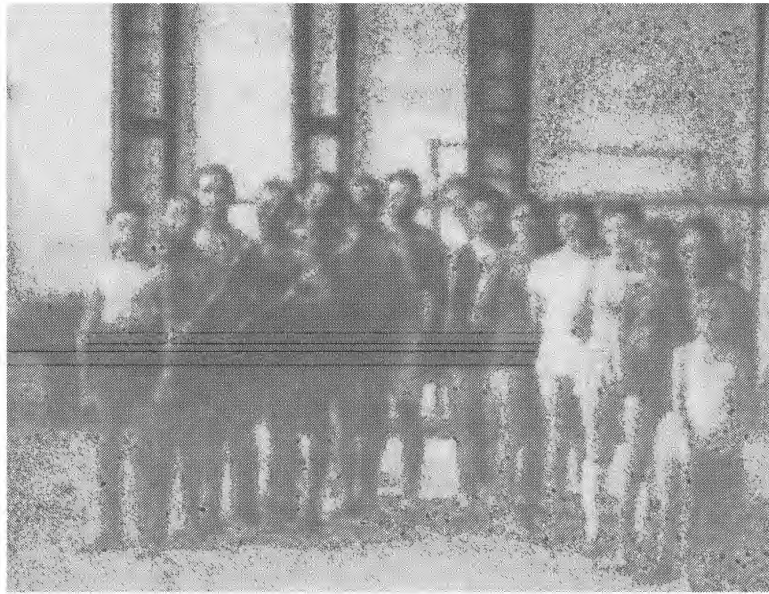
#### **An outing to the Triple Islands**

Standing, from the left: Major Béla, Reismann Jenő, Dr. Valkó Dezső, Schulhofné Basch Erzsi, Dr. Salamonné Boriska, Dr. Valkoné Blanczi, Horovitz Tibor, Dr. Salamon Béla & Keren (Klein) Mozzi



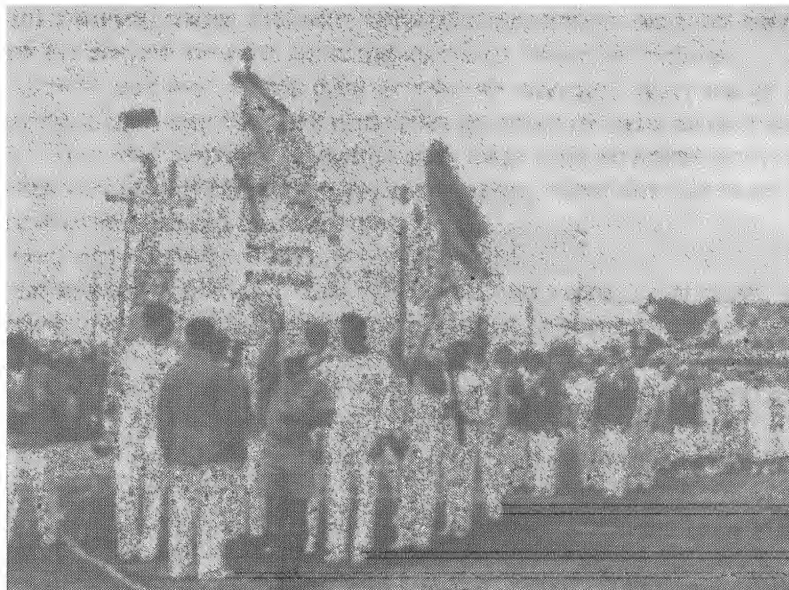
#### **The swimmers**

Standing from the left: Schulhoff, Dr. Salamon, Messer Klári, Glanz Majsi, Hollender  
Sitting: Frommer, Jávör, Aszodi, Sebestyén and Földes



**The gymnastics team**

Women: Szabo Gizi, Gács Elvira, Waldner Piri, Rosenwasser Fany. In front the daughter of Hoffmann Henrik. Men: Hoffmann Henrik, Rosenwasser Joska, Pscherhofer Karcsi, Nissel Chilku, Lehrer



Participants in the 1935 Maccabi competitions: Glancz Lazar and Dr. Pécsi with the flag



## Chapter 8

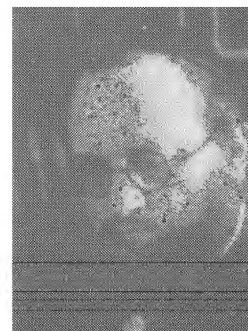
### Details from the History of the Autonomous Orthodox Community in Arad (1904-1940) (\*139)

In the year 1904, a small group of devout people decided to split from the confinement of the neologue rites Jewish community, in order to establish an autonomous community of the orthodox rites. A delegation was dispatched to the orthodox chief-rabbi of Budapest, Koppel Reich, asking for his assistance in accomplishing this separation, and winning his approval.

The community succeeded in getting to Arad an extremely learned rabbi, **Jehuda Szofer**, the son of the rabbi Eliezer Szofer from Paks, and he was installed on the occasion of a communal assembly on July 25, 1909. Unfortunately, his blessed activity lasted for only three years, he passed away on the 6-th day of Pesach, 1912. The leaderless community, decided unanimously to bring around a young rabbi, who should marry the orphaned daughter of the defunct rabbi, Rozalia Szofer. The choice was **Joachim Schreiber**, the son of the worthy Jakob Shalom Schreiber from Budapest. He was born in 1887, and studied at the Bratislava yeshiva. The community had in the meantime grown furthermore, and they tenured Joachim Schreiber as “chief rabbi and executive of the registry” on the occasion of a special meeting (October 19, 1913).

From the initial moment of accepting the rabbinical seat, Joachim Schreiber set for himself the goal of getting involved in all matters pertaining to the community, as well as in the problems of the individual members. Through sermons and writings, he guided the young people to the study of the Torah, drawing them to the faith, the fear of God, and the enjoyment of the Torah. He convinced the young to study in the yeshiva. Within a short time period, the tally (originally small) of the community grew and gradually it became level with other well established, famous Transylvanian communities.

**Joachim Schreiber** was especially active in the fields of Tzedaka and Ghemiluth Chasadim. He believed in epitomizing the teachings of a passage of the Vajikra: “If your brother in faith impoverishes, don’t let him slump, lift him by his armpits, because if you let him fall, straightening him up will be tougher”.



Whenever there was a matter of dispute, it was customary to deposit the contested sums, as dictated by the Torah, until a verdict was reached. It is impossible to estimate the amounts loaned from these deposits by the chief rabbi Schreiber to destitute parishioners, until the dispute was solved and the sum was handed to the respective party in the dispute. Whenever a widow, an orphan or an aged person needed help, he did launch a fund-raiser. He did assist the indigent parents of the pupils from the yeshiva. He collected money, food and sundry for those deported to Transnistria. It is well known that amongst the many refugees arriving to Arad from Poland, Bucovina, Galitzia and the Maramureş in the years 1940-45, there were numerous Hassidic Jews. Each of them brought his own rites, religious services and customs. The rabbi did shelter many of them. Some rabbis openly criticized this activity, but he was not deterred in his attitude. He did launch the studying in the Heder; he initiated the creation of a strong community with multifaceted activities: Hevra Kadisha, Talmud Torah, Gemilat Hesed, the women's organization, etc.

While in most of Transylvania, there were differences of opinion and tendencies of discord between the orthodox and neologue groupings, between the Zionists and anti-Zionists, as well as between the various Hassidic persuasions, in Arad there was "peace" amongst those who differed. This was due to the wisdom and powers of persuasion of the chief rabbi Schreiber, who did stop the bickering between the different bodies.

In September 1940, the legionary police force, after searching his home, arrested him and his wife. In his last years Joachim Schreiber was weakened by multiple afflictions, nevertheless he did continue to dedicate his efforts to the Community and to helping the indigent. Although he was never officially a Zionist, his spirit was totally devoted to Zion. He often exclaimed what happiness it would be to live in Eretz Israel, joined by his children and followers. Fate did not grant him the enjoyment of the aliyah. He guided wisely his community for 36 years and was lost to a premature death at the age of only 62. The 2-d of Sivan in the year 1949, was a sad day for the Jews in Arad. Later his remains were exhumed and carried to Israel, in order to rest forever in the Holy Land (Kever Israel).

Certainly there were divergences of belief in-between the neologue and orthodox faithful. Nevertheless whenever the standing of the communities and the well-being of the members demanded it, there was beneficial agreement and collaboration. The chief rabbi Dr. Schreiber cooperated in numerous common actions with the neologue chief rabbi Dr. Vágvölgyi, as well as with his successor Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld. The later was fully aware of the call of the times - the preeminence of the Zionist ideas and always stuck to his beliefs. They all excelled in coordinating the activities of the two communities, in those difficult times for the Jews.

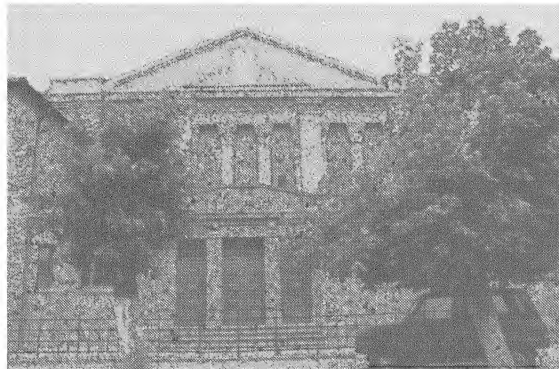
In the peaceable period before the start of the First World War, the south of Transylvania offered an auspicious economical climate. Polish Jews subsisting in poverty, were advised by their rabbis to move into the Arad county, an area rich in viticulture. As such the families Lutwák, Birnfeld, Hilewitz, Feinkuchen, Kweksilber, Rothbaum, Fenyves, Teuerholtz and Baum, did settle in the villages close to Arad.

After the onset of the first World War, the same rabbis fearing possible excesses and pogroms connected to the war, did advise these families to relocate into the city of Arad, the county seat. Likewise during the war, numerous Jews from Maramureş sought shelter in Arad. All of this strengthened the orthodox community, bringing it up to par with the oldest and most prestigious orthodox communities of Transylvania. At the same time the first Hasidic families did appear in Arad: Stauber, Feldmann, Ganz, Fisch, etc. In no time they had a minyan, and they erected a prayer house of their own. Becoming members of the orthodox community, they stayed on, paying regularly their assessments. In view of the fact that hitherto teaching was done by private melameds, there was an effort to set up a Talmud Torah. Josif Schapira and Hermann Lebovits were such instructors, teaching Alef-Beit in their own homes.

Within a short time the Talmud Torah was constituted with the backing of the community and the melameds were put on a payroll. This ensured the free studying of the penurious pupils. In the period following the war, the first paid melamed was the former rabbi Friedmann, who settled in Arad as a refugee from the white terror. The first gabbe was Moshe Kremer, to be succeeded by Salamon Wurzel. The Talmud Torah grew incrementally, becoming a school with 5 classes. Among the eminent teachers of that institution were: Schmajovits, Fischer, Menczer, Stern, Mozes, Schieber, Klein, Weinberger, Haberfeld, Gottlieb, etc.

The leadership of the community decided to send to London the professor Jakob Steiner (he was English speaking), with the purpose to raise the funds needed to improve the precarious financial status of the community and to complete the construction of the synagogue.

It was a successful mission, but the completion of the synagogue took place only after the disastrous postwar inflationary period, towards the end of the third decade. The plans were made by Dömötör Ladislau and the architect was Emil Tabakovits. The move from the small and confined house of prayers (in the street presently called Sándor Asztalos) to the new synagogue was effected on a memorable day. The foremen of the community, lead by the mohel, vorbeter and shakter Chajim Mendel Müller, carried by hand the Torah scrolls.



**The Orthodox Synagogue**

On the Fish Square (The “Old Plaza”) there was a small mikveh (ritual bath), and a matzoth manufacturing plant. Prior to Pesach, the prayer house was converted into a storehouse for the matzo flour, and in this period there was no instruction for the pupils.

Due to the new immigrants, the orthodox community shifted toward a more pious disposition. New people who labored towards the consolidation of the community were brought into the leadership. The following is a roster of the successive presidents: Emanuel Schwartzberger, Jákob Márton, Simon Epstein, Julius Hönig, Eugen Wiesel, Jakob Scharfstein, Moshe Hacker, Moshe Fried. Amongst the most distinguished members and vigorous activists we name the following: H. Hirschfeld, Juliu Lipkovits, Samuel Hilewitz, Martin Strassburger, Josif Irom, Josif Teuerholz, Alter Stauber, Béla Popper, Isidor Feinkuchen, Hugo Sternberg, Endre Pollák, Márk Markovits, Isidor Friedmann, Avram Moskovitz, Salamon Wurzel, Mendel Rosenfeld, Josef Finkelstein, and later: Moshe Nissel, Matl Farkas, Emanuel Melamed, Miksa Hönig, Avram Chaim Herskovits, Avraham Krausz, Bumi Nissel.

The task of “Vorbeter” was performed in succession by Aron Singer, Mendel Chaim Müller, Nissel Chaim Mendel, in addition to the cantors (hazan) Avner Szabo, Reb Eisig, Stauber, etc. The shakers were: Sabsowits, Rosenwasser, Wizsnitzer, Klein, etc.

There were various administrative changes within the leadership of the community. For instance it was decided to replace the unremunerated clerks and secretaries with a paid employee. Juliu Háber was appointed to this task, a practical person endowed with a commercial mind, administrative experience and the knowledge of the Romanian language (a rare circumstance in those times). Exercising his considerable assiduousness he consolidated the financial base of the community. One of the sources of income became the expanded matzoth factory, which had increased its production to be able to supply the whole of Transylvania.

The community decided to set up a new cemetery, apart from the neologue one, in the neighborhood of the ITA textile factory. In the third decade there existed for a short while a yeshiva, under the direction of the rabbi Schreiber. In the time period between the two wars, numerous orthodox and Hasidic families did settle in Arad: the households Pollák, Nissel, Muskal, Fruchter, Feig, Spitzer, Gottesfeld, Adler, etc. Many of the young men did marry girls from the orthodox rites group and settled in Arad. They were soon included in the leadership of the community.

By the fourth decade the Hevra Kadisha, Talmud Tora, Gemilat Chesed, the Women's Association (under the leadership of Mrs. Rothschild), were all running successfully. The statutes of the community were well established, there were assemblies, gatherings, elections, a fruitful activity within civilized and democratic settings. A major transformation occurred after the well-known Vienna dictate (August 30, 1940), when Ribbentrop and Ciano decided to split Transylvania: the Northern half was adjudicated to Hungary, while the South stayed with Romania. Thus the orthodox community of Arad came to be the largest and most representative in Southern Transylvania.

ű i ő

longy 10 longy 7

Szent ősi hitvallásunk hű követőjének,  
az orthodox magasztos ism. kitartó harcosának,  
hitközségünk első vezetőjének

Történelondó

Schreiber Jerachim rabbi ur

szíves tudomására hozzuk, hogy alantí időben megtar-  
tott rendkívüli közgyűlésünk:

Történelondóságodot

anyakönyvvizsgáló főrabbi-nak

nagy lelkesedéssel egyhangúlag örökösen megszavaz-  
totta, mely körülmények között tudomására hoztuk:

Alóírottak, kik a nagy jelentőségű közgyűlé-  
sen részt vettünk, és mint halálra emlékeztünk meg  
ur prófétaivaló Istenuinkról, hogy Történelondóságodot,  
mint hitű szolgáját hozzáink vettük, és mint  
hitközségi vezetőnként, is főrabbinak elismertük  
Hozzászólásunkat és a közgyűlési előterjesztés!

Arad, 1913. október hó 19

Márton János  
alelnök

Jankó János  
el. jegyző

Marton János  
elnök

Székely János  
főtitkár

Székely János  
főtitkár

Lutwak János  
alelnök

Hirtfeld Márton  
leltárkezelő



Hirtfeld Márton  
leltárkezelő

## **Chapter 9**

### **The Jews of Arad in the Shadow of the Holocaust (1940-1944)**

The anti-Jewish actions in Arad can be divided into the following steps:

1. **The transitional period** (1937 - September 1940), marked by the advent of restrictive anti-Semitic measures in the political, social and economic life, with the goal of removing the Jews from all facets of society: civic, military and economic.

2. **The legionary-Antonescian period** (September 1940 - January 1941), extreme restrictions applied exclusively against the Jews: expropriations of possessions and removal of the Jews from the educational system. Furthermore actions outside the legal confines, and pogroms which were supported by the government and the officials.

3. **The Antonescian period** (January 1941 - August 1944): the forced destitution of the Jewish populace, a threat to the very existence and on occasion - deportation.

1. **The stage of transition towards anti-Jewish policies** did start in December 1937, with the investiture of the right-wing Goga-Cuza government, composed mostly by representatives of the openly anti-Semitic National-Christian Party. The initial step was to revoke from the Jews all permits of selling alcoholic beverages. This act essentially hurt the Jews from rural areas, wherein they owned vineyards and alcohol factories. The first patently anti-Jewish legislation was the "revision of the citizenship". This statute published on January 22, 1938, provided that everybody who was registered in a locality on the occasion of the census of 1918, had to prove on paper, that he belonged to that community as far back as 4 years. This legislation jeopardized the Jews of Bucovina, Basarabia and Maramureş, who gained asylum and livelihood in those areas fleeing from war and pogroms. This measure afflicted 25% of the Jewish population of the unified Romania. A total of 225,000 Jews (among whom 73,000 were heading a family) forfeited their citizenship (\*146). The main consequence of this proscribing legislation was financial. The "Jamandi ordinance" from September 1938, bade that all those who could not "prove" their citizenship, should automatically be losing their work-permits within a year. Arad County lost over 300 rural Jews. In the decade 1930-1940, many

Jews left Romania, bringing forth a drop in the numbers of the Jewish population.

A calamitous event happened in the period 1942-43, when a group of Jewish people who did forfeit their citizenship (and as such were considered “aliens”), were forcibly put on a train and taken to the Hungarian frontier. They had a difficult time, being kept without food, under the open sky, exposed to inclement weather. The Jewish community of Arad, in the end managed to secure from the authorities permission for those people to return to their homes. Nonetheless, there was no official written warrant, and those “displaced” people continued to live in an utterly precarious situation.

During the last days of the royal dictatorship of king Carol the 2-d, the government of G. Gigurtu, did lay down the Edict of August 9, 1940, which was intended to completely destroy the economical and social might of the Jews.

Jews were excluded from multiple pursuits. In the rural areas all commerce was forbidden, and later the Jews had to sell their holdings either to Romanians or to the state. The decree banned the Jews from exercising the legal profession, from acting, from the military and from working as newspapermen or editors. The Jews could no continue to be on the board of enterprises. The access to all educational institutions, in all categories and grades, was limited to 6% of the total (“*numerus clausus*”). Jews were proscribed from the civil service. All governmental subsidies to ecclesiastical activities were terminated. Eliminating the Jews from the military brought forth impressing them into labor service or alternately having to pay monetary indemnities. On September 6, 1940, the Gigurtu government and the whole royal regime of Carol the 2-d collapsed. The governance was taken over by a coalition of right-wing nationalistic military groupings, represented by the general Ion Antonescu and the extreme right-wing legionary movement, lead by Horia Sima. The above-mentioned anti-Semitic legislation became merely an introductory measure, in the buildup of the more general and comprehensive anti-Jewish legislation.

## **2. The legionary-Antonescian period (September 1940 - January 1941).**

In the whole country this phase was characterized by a/. the significant expansion of the anti-Jewish measures hatched by the Gigurtu government, b/. the strictest implementation of the expropriation ordinances concerning rural Jewish assets (including the participation of the judicial agencies) and c/. the exercising on a local level of such abusive measures, that were not laid down even by the racial statutes created after September 6, 1940.

In Arad the working permits of the theatrical agencies were revoked. In the schools, within barely one month of the application of the *numerus clausus* at 6%, all Jewish pupils were eliminated (“*numerus nullus*”). Jewish students were banned from all institutions of higher education. The land-holdings were seized, including the unreaped harvests, and on November 17, 1940, all rural manufacturing undertakings were confiscated too. The following are data from the archives of the Arad County Offices: the confiscations included 206 buildings, 208 properties with a total acreage of 14,000 cultivable land, 98 vineyards, 16 mills, 3 sawmills, 1 spirits distillery, 3 oil presses, 1 textile plant and over 18,000 hectares of forest (\*147). There were also abusive confiscations, like land or a plant that was sold long time before the law was promulgated. For instance in Chişineu Criş a sale of 68 hectares of land, effected by the Jewish owner József Schillinger in the year 1929 was nullified, as well as two other sales in the Hălmagiu district effected in the years 1927 and 1935 (\*148).

Similarly in the city of Arad proper, there were abusive seizures. Several Jewish store and workshop owners were forced to sell those at ludicrous prices. The former lawyer and activist in the leadership of the occidental rites community, Dr. Albert Fuchs, was keeping a personal diary, with daily annotations from the fall of 1940 to the end of 1944. The information contained in this diary relates to local details, and the present publication is often based on those data.

Dr. Albert Fuchs mentions the instance when a Jewish merchant of leather-wares was ejected in broad daylight from his shop by two armed legionnaires. He resorted to the chief prosecutor of the Arad Tribunal, Mr. Petre Ionescu, who did redress the outrage. For this act of his, Mr. Ionescu was severely admonished by the chief prosecutor of the Appellate Court, Mr. Vasvari, who later managed to get Mr. Ionescu relieved of his function. Such “cover up” of illegal and abusive acts by zealous public officials, became a routine. For this purpose a so-called “Office of legionnaire control” (authorized by the County executive Dr. Rotea and the chief of Police Dr. Preda) was established in the County Offices itself. Various Jewish merchants were summoned and at times confined there, until they agreed to sign over their business at ludicrous prices.

One December evening in 1940, the three owners of the “Dacia” cafe situated in the heart of the city, two Jews, Scheer and Leipnicker, as well as Mr. Zsédei - all of them well-known personalities - were detained and taken to the infamous “Green house” at the entrance of the city grove, where they were confined until they signed over their business, which the next day was renamed “New Romanian business”.

In the archives of the Arad County there are other documents, which confirm the willful atmosphere of that period, sanctioning the widespread misappropriations. The file 248/41 refers to the case of the Jewish owner Andrei Schillinger, who in December of 1940 sold, under duress, the “Armătura” factory to Ion Constantin, the chief of the legionnaires in Arad. The price “agreed upon” was to be paid from the so-called assistance funds of the legionnaires. File No.66/41 from the data of the County Offices indicates the out of a total of lei 33.8 millions in the “legionnaire’s assistance funds” the sum of lei 15 million was extorted from the Textile Mills of Arad, the factory owned by the family of baron Neumann.

In addition to extorting significant funds from the more affluent Jews, the hooligans from the legionnaire’s police proceeded to institute a regime of real terror, among other places in the “Răcváros”, an area inhabited mostly by destitute Jews. One of the victims of this campaign was a family member of the famous Wischnitzer rabbi, who together with his suite was a refugee from the Bucovina. Only 2 days after his arrival to Arad, he was arrested in the middle of the night by 14 legionnaires, together with his secretary (Ben Zion), his host (Abraham Feig) and 2 more Jews - Michael Costiner and Haim Leb Stein. This rabbi was extremely ill, nevertheless he was taken as a prisoner to Deva, where he finally was hospitalized. After numerous intercessions he was lastly allowed to stay in Timișoara.

All Zionist organizations, as well as the sports clubs (including the Hakoah) were outlawed. There was a meeting of a number of Zionists in the courtyard of the activist Filip Huppert, with the purpose to set up an organizational center for the Aviva-Barissia (Habonim). The legionnaire police force made an appearance and arrested those present there: Filip Huppert, Moshe Klein (Keren), Imre Farkas, Wilhelm Reich, Rozalia Krausz, as well as the guest from Timișoara, Miksa Fried. They were freed by the above mentioned prosecutor Ionescu.

The failure of the legionnaire uprising on January 22-24, 1941, did put an end to the legionnaire-Antonescian coalition, but the following era was as ominous for the Jews of Romania in general, as for those in Arad.

### **3/. The Antonescian period. (January 1941 - August 1944).**

The anti-Jewish measures expanded during the dictatorship of general (later Marshall) Ion Antonescu. The situation of the Jews in Arad was similar to what happened in the rest of the country.

The goal of these measures was:

- a. The removal of the Jews from all segments of the national economy, to be followed by a drastic reduction in the living standard of the Jewish populace.
- b. The exploitation without compensation of the Jewish work force, within the “compulsory work program”.
- c. The forcible moving of the Jews from the rural areas into the cities, creating crowded living conditions.
- d. The impoverishing of the Jews through a multitude of regulations.

The German allies of Romania were categorically pressing toward a total extinction of the Jews. The Romanian stance concerning the “final solution” (Endlösung) was far more hesitant, more ambiguous.

We will go over the tangible moves, implemented by the Antonescian authorities against the Jews living in Arad.

**a. The removal of the Jews from the national economy.**

The Jews were dismissed from various institutions and enterprises as a consequence of the anti-Jewish legislation of September 6, 1940. A total of 100,000 unemployed Jews are documented in the archives of the Department of Justice on February 9, 1941. The 1945 data of the Romanian section of the Jewish World Congress, indicate that in Arad in the year 1942, there were 2000 unemployed Jews (who had been previously employed), and the majority (between 50-60%) were white-collar (trade and administration) and artisans. Generally speaking the unemployment rate was higher in Arad than in the rest of the country. This was due mainly to the high number of rural Jews, forcibly moved to Arad (22% of the Jewish population). The productive Jewish population in Arad was only 18.5% as compared with the national average of 21.8%.

The percentage of white-collar workers and owner-merchants was bigger in Arad than in the rest of the country, while the number of the blue-collar workers and artisans was smaller. As a consequence, there was a far larger number of unemployed Jews in Arad, due to the losses induced by the Romanization of the enterprises and the dismissals from the jobs. The policy of “Romanization” - meaning the substitution of the Jews in the public and private domain - started in Arad in the spring of 1941, and continued through the years 1942 and 1943. There was a memorandum submitted by Dr. Fildermann on January 30, 1943, wherein he establishes that from all the certificates which

should have guaranteed the exercise of a profession to the Jews, only 30% were upheld \*(149). The work contracts granted to Jews were extended in a provisional manner, every time for a 6 month period. These agreements and extensions were awarded always after substantial payments.

Similarly the taxation of the artisans and the levies for exemption from the forced labor were of such magnitude, that the business of many craftsmen became a money loser, they had to close shop and join the ranks of the other poverty-stricken Jews.

Those Jews exercising the free professions, had to deal with increasing, almost prohibitive hardships. The Jewish physicians could treat - legally - only Jewish patients. "Jewish physician" had to be displayed on their signboards, and later even "Jidan physician" (Jidan in Romanian language is the derogative term applied to Jews). Lawyers could deal only with Jewish clients. In the diaries of the lawyer Dr. Albert Fuchs, there is mention of the "special arrangements" of the Bar Association, as well of the Medical Association, which were overseeing these restrictions. The anti-Jewish legislation did not affect in the same measure the more affluent segment of the population. The most victimized were the "small people", i.e. the lesser merchants and tradesmen, the intellectuals, and the workers with a lower income. The pauperization of these people impacted perforce on the charitable funds of the Jewish Community.

#### **b. The introduction of the "compulsory labor" service for the Jews.**

The pursuit of the free Jewish labor started in August 1941, when the Jews got called up for "obligatory labor", without any regard for the possible individual usefulness. The quotations from the dairy of Dr. Albert Fuchs - which ought to be copied "in toto" - substantiate the merciless drive of the forcible rounding up of men in order to be dispatched into work-camps and forestry:

**"August 3, 1941.** It is a nice, warm summer day. In the first afternoon hours a report circulates throughout the Jewish community of Arad. It is said that all Jewish men, aged 18-50, will have to be tomorrow in the Arad Fortress, supplied with sturdy boots and provisions for 3 days. Soon people convene in groups, parleys are started and rumors are born. There is uncertainty about the chance that men will have to leave their families and workplaces (anyhow those who were working).

**August 4, 1941.** It is Sunday morning, and I am informed that numerous families continue the preparations for the departure of the men. Some did go to the Fortress at 7. a.m. and there was nobody there, as such they returned home. There is a rumor that people will be called up individually (like it was supposed

to happen in Timișoara). There is considerable anguish, the more that it is rumored that as of August 5, the people aged 51-60 will be registered, in order to be dispatched for labor too. I can't stand it anymore, I go to the Community Offices, to find out what's going on. Here I am told that they phoned already twice from the Fortress, - where are the Jews? The telephone is constantly ringing at the Community Office, all callers are summoned to go immediately into the Fortress.

On the street I am witnessing some dramatic sights. Hundreds of policemen, plainclothesmen and clerks are roaming the streets, entering the houses and shops to round up the Jews, who ought to go to the Fortress. It is dreadful to see such a manhunt. In the meantime, numerous Jews aged 18-50 did go, on their own, on foot or by cart to the meeting-place.

The time is now 4 p.m. and it is rumored that all men are to be seen by a medical commission. I find out that hundreds of women congregated at the entrance to the Fortress, to ascertain what happened to the spouses, and to bring provisions. Anyway there is no admittance to the Fortress, but several kindhearted soldiers on exiting, do provide some information.

Suddenly there is news about the men leaving - to Basarabia. There is a moment of panic, and finally a more benignant information: the departure is for different places in Transylvania.

At about 9 p.m. came the news that the men are leaving; in the meantime a powerful rain shower came down, drenching the crowd of waiting family members. Indeed a row of carts make their appearance, loaded with luggage and things, followed by our brethren, arrayed in columns according to the alphabetical sequence. The drama of the scenery is enhanced by the pouring rain and the incessant lightning and thundering. The police is chasing home the women who are crying while leaving. In the meantime the 18-50 aged men arrive to the station, where at 1 a.m. they are loaded into the wagons, and they depart for an uncertain destiny.

**August 5, 1941.** In the morning those aged 51-60, are mustered for registration (the author of the diary is one of them). By 8 o'clock numerous men had entered the Military Offices, but none had exited yet. It is only by noontime that those assembled are brought before a medical commission. Amongst the 51-60 years old men there are not many who would be able to perform physical labor, there are numerous sick and even handicapped, nevertheless the commission asserts that most of them are suitable for the mandatory labor. By 2 p.m. the commission completed its business. The men are let to go home, with the instruction to follow the notices at the Community, because there will be no individual call-ups.

**August 6, 1941.** The first news arrive from those who were sent to other locations, supposedly they are in good health and are working under satisfactory circumstances. Obviously this is hard to ascertain.

**August 7, 1941.** In the afternoon, the foremen of the two communities (neologue and orthodox) are called to the Military Offices, where they are directed to inform all the 51-60 years old, that on Saturday, August 9, they have to appear at 7 a.m. with a shovel and provisions for 3 days. There is no information on where they may be sent, but it is presumed to be somewhere within the County. The mood is desperate. Initially they nabbed the fit ones, and now it is the turn of the parents and even the grandfathers. People are desperately looking for shovels or similar tools, those who don't own one, are buying. Many try again the medical commission, but most are rejected.

**August 8, 1941.** Word got out that the 2 chief rabbis tried to enlist the intervention of the Greek-orthodox bishop, in an attempt to postpone the departure of the elder ones with 2 days. This intervention bears no results, the trains are waiting. Numerous men are trying to buy sturdy boots, the prices went up to lei 3000-3500, the profiteers take advantage of the distress. In the meantime the women try to round up the clothing and footwear, which according to a special ordinance, has to be handed over to the authorities. The president of the neologue Community, Dr. Aladár Lakatos is summoned to the police headquarters. At a late evening hour the information comes from the community, that the men have to appear next morning at the Jewish school, but without the tools. This kindles some hope.

**August 9, 1941.** At 7 in the morning the 51-60 years old are there, but some of the 16-18 years old got called up too. Many people come with some luggage, tools and provisions. After a long wait, at noontime, the chief of police makes an appearance, together with another police officer, advising the people that they will have to go before a medical commission. A couple of hours later - big sensation: a colonel and 2 other higher ranked officers arrive, and they inform the crowd that the 51-60 years old men can go home. Meanwhile the "Biruința", one of the local newspapers, complains about the fact that not all the Jews were taken to forced labor, that the Jews are still doing far too well."

The younger ones were later dispatched to work within the County. The climate of marshaling the Jews for the mandatory labor service was intentionally dramatized by the authorities, with repeated threats of major punishments directed toward those who would not respond to the call-up.

The Jews from Arad were consigned to the following labor camps: Sighișoara, Brașov, Pâncota, Păuliș, Doaga and Cuslea (near Focșani). It was difficult to obtain a medical discharge, and it was usually only in exchange of a

considerable “offering”. The levies of exemption were quite steep, onerous to pay. For instance in 1942, 390 Jews of Arad had such an exemption, while 800 were recruited for labor (\*150). A number of them were taken to hard labor, like the 552 men working in forestry (\*151). The periods of time they did work ranged to 250-300 days, effected without a break (\*152). One can find out from data stored in the archives of the city and the Jewish community that the people exploited in the labor camps, were indeed not provided with the minimum of work clothes. A memo of the Office of the Chief of Staff, add. A # 985,000 from October 14, 1942, confirms that nothing was done concerning the replacement of the equipment utilized, or relief to the families of those called up for work, these problems being kept in a limbo (\*153). It was obvious, that the men being in the labor camps could not earn an income for their families, as such their only prospect was to expect assistance from the charitable agencies of the community. Those aged 18-21, who were active in the local labor camps, were in a similarly sorry condition, often deprived even from getting the foodstuff due to them (this situation was appealed in a written notice by the local Community).

**c. The forcible moving from the rural areas to the city, and the worsening of the housing conditions.**

In June 1941, there was a special directive by Antonescu, ordering an almost total expulsion of the Jews from the villages and small cities, into the county seats. According to statistical data, this statute affected about 1600 Jews (\*154), in the Arad County. They were all removed to Arad within a number of hours, without any concern for their housing needs. This ordinance had a major effect upon the whole community. The rural Jews either moved in with relatives, creating overcrowding in their living space, or they were compelled to pay, occasionally exorbitant, rents to the owners of apartments. This transfer of the Jews from the villages happened in the period, when according to the decree No. 842 of March 1941, the houses owned by Jews were expropriated, affecting a total of 645 buildings (\*155). The evacuation of the former Jewish owners and tenants from their nationalized buildings did begin soon after. Up to March 1944, all the 3000 Jews of Arad, who lived in the formerly Jewish-owned buildings, were constantly and at any time exposed to the arbitrary expulsion from their dwellings, whenever a non-Jewish person (mainly a public official) fancied to relocate into such a “formerly Jewish” habitation. Under these circumstances, as early as 1941 there was a plan, corroborated with contemporary documents, to place the Jews into a ghetto. There was a confidential circular signed personally by the dictator Antonescu and conveyed to all county executives (the circular missive No. 1813/ March 13, 1941)

wherein suggestions were solicited about the massing of the Jews in ghettos in every urban center. The county executives were advised to consider ahead of time the location of the future ghetto, and to put forward a scheme for a smooth rendition of such an action. In Arad, at the March 26, 1941 conference of the County Office (the County Executive was the general staff colonel Vasile Mihăilescu), it was decided that the future ghetto will be set up in parts of the indigent "Serb Quarter", where obviously it was impossible to house all the 9500 Jews of Arad, in addition to those evacuated from the rural areas (see the appendix of this tome). There was no authorization from București to this proposal, and the decision to move all the Jews into a ghetto was deferred. Nevertheless in the period January-April 1942, Jews were not allowed to change their habitation, except in the area which was envisioned as the future ghetto (\*156).

We quote again from the diary of the same lawyer Dr. Albert Fuchs, on some of the moves of this inhuman wager with the ornery housing conditions of the thousands of Jewish families in Arad:

**"August 1941.** The first 100 summons were issued for vacating the apartments in the expropriated buildings. Any Romanian is on principle entitled to claim the domicile of a Jew in one of those buildings, with the first right going to the refugees from Northern Transylvania.

**September 1941.** Additional 300 summons for the evacuation of the apartments.

**October 1, 1941.** Those Jews who did not vacate yet their homes, do get a 6 month extension on their rental contracts.

**January 15 - April 1942.** The moving of the Jews into different dwellings is allowed only by a permit from the Prefectura (County Offices), and only in the area designed for the ghetto.

**March 15, 1942.** There is a new deadline (April 9), by which any Romanian can assert his claim on any home inhabited by Jews in the expropriated buildings.

**April 5, 1942.** The Jews whose apartments were claimed are allowed to move in any part of the city.

**May 1, 1942.** Those Jews whose dwellings were not yet claimed can get an extension of their contracts on 2 conditions: a/. they can't take lodgers, b/. the National Center of Romanization (N.C.R. was the agency created to administer the expropriated Jewish possessions) is empowered to void at any moment, at its discretion, the rental agreement.

**October 1, 1942.** Those Jews who are still living in the buildings administered by the N.C.R. are advised that they have to leave their lodgings until November 1, 1942 (in the end this measure was not totally implemented).

**April 1, 1943.** Those few Jews, who are still living in the former Jewish buildings, are authorized to sign a contract for unlimited terms with the N.C.R., paying a rent 15% higher, than what a non-Jewish citizen would have been required to lay out for a similar dwelling.”

Moreover the relentless pauperization remained a constant and gradually aggravating fact.

#### **d. The ruining of the Jews through a host of steps.**

The huge amounts exacted from the Jews for exemptions from the forced labor and the escalated expenses for housing in the spring of 1941, were compounded by additional acts of extortion from the Romanian authorities - in Arad, as well as in the rest of the country. Some of these actions were: the collection of a large quantity of clothing and footwear, the outfitting of some field hospitals, compulsory contribution to a domestic loan (4 times larger than what the non- Jews had to pay) and a special assessment of 4 billion lei, imposed only on the Jews. It is known that the Jews from Arad had to furnish 4 field hospitals, had to collect and donate warm clothing and footwear valued at hundreds of millions of lei, and for the extraordinary assessment of 1942-43 they did deliver 340 million lei (out of which the baron Neumann alone gave the amount of 235 million lei) (\*157).

The Jewish Community assisted the indigent families as well as those who did lose their homes. The pauperization did continue even after the end of the war. In the statistical data presented to the JOINT, about 15% of the Jews from Arad, a total number of 1370 persons, were considered totally impoverished (\*158).

The ravaged budgets of the Jewish families were affected not only by the more or less “legal” levies. There was a monstrous web of gouging significant amounts of moneys (in fact bribes) from the Jews: the grafts for extending the work contracts, housing contracts, rental agreements (in the former Jewish houses and dwellings taken over by the N.C.R.), for the securing and extending of the medical dispensations from forced labor, for procuring the travel permits needed for arranging urgent matters. In addition to these enormous expenses, huge amounts were requested by the Central Jewish Authority via the Community. In order to be able to satisfy the increased expenses of social assistance and other social-cultural objectives, the Community had to increase the amount of the communal assessments from 4.6

million lei to 13 million lei in the years 1942-1944. (\*159). Likewise the rural Jews had to sell their properties at preposterous prices. In order to effect those sales, they needed travel permits, for which one had to pay on the average lei 4000 as a bribe (\*160).

\* \* \*

### **The Jews Live in an Environment of Relentless Stress**

The Jews of Arad were tormented not only by the factual strains engendered by the acts of the authorities. The atmosphere was replete with myriad wild rumors about diverse new measures any of them with possible lethal consequences to the Jews.

We shall mention some of these alarming reports as noted in the diary of the lawyer dr. Albert Fuchs. The diary was originally written in Hungarian and this is a selective translation:

**“June 29 - July 1, 1941.** The first words arrive about the bloodshed in Jassy.

**July 12, 1941.** Rumors about the removal of the Jews to concentration camps.

**July 13, 1941.** A report from the village of Pecica, about the desecration of the abandoned synagogue.

**August 1-4, 1941.** Arrests in connection with the selling, deemed fraudulent, of some properties and enterprises; a number of Jewish suspects are detained, amongst them Dr. Adalbert Windholz, Rudolf Farago, Mrs. Dr. Thau, etc.

**August 3-10, 1941.** Major commotion within the community, due to the messy call-up for the compulsory labor service of the 18-50 years old ones, continued with the age group of 16-18. The 51-60 years old ones are upset through similar actions.

**September 7, 1941.** Rumors about the presaged wearing of the yellow star.

**October 22, 1941.** The first sentencing in the matter of those implicated in the so-called fraudulent transfer of Jewish properties.

**October 24, 1941.** Dreadful news are arriving about the deportations of the Jews from Bucovina and Basarabia to Transnistria.

**November 22, 1941.** There is a rumor about deportations to Transnistria of those who fail to pay the military levies.

**December 12, 1941.** There is a rumor about those who fail to pay the contributions for exemptions from the labor service: they will be sent to forestry in Bucovina.

**December 14, 1941.** Renewal of the rumor about the deportation of the Jews to Transnistria, after they become totally destitute.

**February 10-15, 1942.** There is distress connected to the call-up of the 22- 42 years old ones, to appear with shovels and pickaxes. Soon it turns out that they are expected to do snow removal. On February 18, even those over 42 are summoned.

**February 26, 1942.** The news arrive about the tragedy of the boat “Struma” which, loaded with Jews, was sunk in the Black sea.

**February 17, 1942.** Tragic news about the fate of the Jews deported to Transnistria.

**June 21, 1942.** There is a rumor about a decision of the Government, that all the Jews who became Romanian citizen after 1918, will be deported. It is to be noted that almost all of the Jews in Arad, were in this position.”

It needs to be stressed that on the local level, some actions of the authorities contributed to heighten the distress of the Jews in Arad.

For instance in June 1942, there was the affair of those 39 citizens deemed to be Jews, who were baptized after August 3, 1940, in defiance of the legal ordinances. The investigation resulted in deportation to Transnistria for 12 of them.

### **The Hazard of the Mass Deportations in 1942**

The matter of the deportation of the Romanian Jews was exceedingly important and it demonstrated the dubious stance of the Romanian authorities and government. This position was conspicuously evident in the fall of 1942, when the bare physical existence of the Jews in Arad, was acutely and dramatically endangered. In the middle of the month of August, 1942, Radu Lecca, the delegate of the Romanian government for the Jewish problems, was sent in a mission to Berlin, but he lacked the authority to reach a decision in dealing with the Germans. He was also directed to devise a procedure for the expeditious removal of the Jews of the Banat and the Western provinces. In addition to the published documents, it is of real interest to peruse again the diary of the lawyer Dr. Albert Fuchs: it successfully offers a realistic description of the panic which engulfed the Jews of Arad in the middle of August 1942.

**“August 16, 1942.** It is a quiet, warm summer day. At 2 o’clock in the afternoon a news bulletin from the Community (occidental rites) is diffused like a thunderbolt. It is about the deportation to Transnistria of the Jews from Arad,

Timișoara and Lugoj, to be carried out next week. In the first moments, the leadership of the Community, after getting those dramatic announcements by phone from the Central Office of the Jews from București, is like paralyzed, unable to react. The first decision is to try not to publish the news, to prevent a panic. But how can one keep secret such news? By 4 p.m. agitated people are talking on the streets. A report is launched about expecting an improvement of the situation, with the purpose to calm the minds. There are no too many believers, people do disperse and petrified, wait for the developments of the following days.

**August 17, 1942.** It is learned that Dr. Adalbert Kállai, one of the leaders of the local “Central Office of Jewish Affairs” did leave for București.

**August 18, 1942.** The rumor is going around that the deportations are to be effected under pressure from Germany. Supposedly the Reich needs the dwelling-space of the Jews, for the approximately 30 thousand Germans who became homeless after Allied bombings in the West-German Ruhr area.

**August 19, 1942.** We find out that Dr. Kállai did phone from București. It is known that parleys are going on, but there are no proper facts.

**August 20, 1942.** There continues to be incertitude. It is rumored that the people of German origin from the Arad area, who congregated in the Cultural Palace to commemorate the poet Lenau, did make use of the slogan “Out with the Jews”. Anybody who calls the Jewish Community on the phone, gets the answer that there is no change in the situation.

**August 21, 1942.** Better news seem to arrive. In the evening services at the synagogue, the chief rabbi Dr. Schönfeld asserts in his sermon that “the storm did pass over our heads”.

**August 22, 1942.** A cold shower. Dr. Kállai informs from București, that nothing is yet resolved. There is a rumor that Radu Lecca, the government agent for Jewish problems, did go to Germany and the necessary decisions will be taken there. One can’t expect anything good from this.

**August 23-27, 1942.** Nobody knows anything, incertitude persists, nevertheless thousands of Jews start to prepare the belongings.

**August 28 - September 1, 1942.** There are rumors that the “matter got postponed to springtime”. In the counties Arad, Caraș and Timiș an “extraordinary status” was decreed by the military authorities, and this does not contribute to the becalming of the mood.

**September 2-10, 1942.** All attention is converging on the detention of some Jewish people considered “communists”, who after a perfunctory inquiry are loaded on a train with the destination to Transnistria.

**September 11, 1942, the Eve of Rosh Hashana.** The President of the Community Aladár Lakatos, is addressing the gathering of the faithful in the synagogue for the New Year Services, following the sermon of the chief rabbi Dr.Schönfeld - he conveys comforting words, but cautions that the “sword of Damocles” continues to hang above our heads. Every Jew has to be prepared for events which may be ahead of us. Since this temple was built, never did such an important and consequential speech occur in it”.

Nowadays there is ample documentary evidence of the events, which in the fall of 1942, were crucial to the fate of the Jewish community in Arad.

The German Reich pursued the removal of the Jews, initially those from the Banat - inclusive Arad - and subsequently their physical liquidation. The Romanian authorities wanted a deportation to Transnistria, starting again with the Jews from the Banat. The Romanian government wanted to jockey for a future position, retaining different options depending on the course of the war. The German envoy to București, Manfred von Killinger, was upset by the equivocating position of the Romanian government concerning the deportation, and asked for an official clarification of their attitude (\*161). At the same time Richter, who was Eichmann’s representative in București, was preparing a document, which projected the deportation of the Romanian Jews to Poland. The camp envisioned for this purpose was to be the one in Belzec (\*162). On September 22, 1942, the administration of the Romanian Railways did inform the Government Council, that they were invited to take counsel with the management of the German Railways and cooperate in charting the dispatch of the Jews into Poland, from Aiud to Belzec. (\*163). The Romanian design - as previously described - was to deport the Jews to Transnistria, from where possibly they could be moved “over the river Bug”. The first step in the implementation of this plan was the deportation of 2500 “suspect” Jews, (amongst them 72 from Arad), and it was halted because of the German prodding. Some of the deported ones were liquidated.

The two documents from Richter are confirming that the Germans were aware of the procrastinating measures taken by Romanian government, related to the matter of deporting the Jews. Coincidentally he mentions his most formidable opponents, those being the baron Francisc Neumann in Arad, and the lawyer Dr. W. Fildermann, a central Jewish figure in Romania. It is believed that the **baron Neumann** did play a major role in saving the Jews of Southern Transylvania from deportation, an accomplishment evinced only after the end of the war. The American Prof. Raoul Hilberg in one of the most outstanding international scholars on the history of the Jewish Holocaust in Europe in the years 1940-1945. In his book published in 1992, (\*189), he writes: “Francisc

Neumann as a leading industrialist was able to use the full potential of his financial and political clout, to oppose the resolve of the Romanian authorities in the matter of the deportation of all Jews from Southern Transylvania. This action of Neumann was a great deed with weighty results". The baron Neumann, the main shareholder of the Textile Mills of Arad, was barely 31 years of age. When he was detained after the war, Dr. W. Fildermann, the principal representative of the Romanian Jewry, solicited on his behalf the intervention of the chief rabbi, Dr. Al. Șafran. The publications of the chief rabbi of Romania, **Dr. Al. Șafran** (\*164), are shedding a light on the events that occurred in the month of August 1942. A delegation of the leaders of the Transylvanian communities arrived clandestinely to București, to inform the Jewish dignitaries of the capital, about the planned mass deportations of the Jews in Southern Transylvania. The intelligence on the imminent deportations was verified and confirmed from the Direction of the Railways too, and a clandestine council was immediately convened. The participants were: the chief rabbi Dr. Al. Șafran, Dr. W. Fildermann, M. Benvenisti, Froimescu and Schwefelberg, with the intent of immediate action. The next step was to alert the King Mihai, the Queen-Mother Elena, the Swiss envoy, the Red Cross delegates, the apostolic Nuncio - Msgr. Andrea Cassulo, Dimitrie Lupu, the president of the High Court of Justice, Dr. Winkler, the dentist of the Royal family and Iuliu Maniu, the president of the National Peasant's Party. The later promised vaguely to intervene, but after a couple of days alleged that he could not get any results.

Finally, the clandestine "Jewish council", decided on a bold and desperate step: they besought the **Archbishop Bălan**, the head of the Romanian Orthodox Church in Transylvania, to come urgently from Sibiu to București. The high dignitary understood the jeopardy of the situation and reacted positively to the request of the chief rabbi. There was a dramatic and upsetting dialogue between the two prelates. Dr. Șafran, amongst other things forewarned the Archbishop, that after their demises, the victims will make him accountable in front of the otherworldly Judge. He will have to answer for the fate of the innocent Jews, who had lived in the realm under his ecclesiastical guardianship. The Archbishop was visibly shaken by those powerful statements and decided on the spot to act. He lifted the receiver of the telephone, called the office of Marshall Ion Antonescu, and asked for an urgent audience. He was invited to come for lunch on the very day. The fate of the Jews was in the hands of the prelate. Early afternoon, the Archbishop called Dr. Șafran and reported that he was able to convince the Marshall Antonescu to rescind the order of the deportation of the Jews from Southern Transylvania. This action of the Archbishop Bălan was like a miracle saving the Jews... It is believed, and Dr. Șafran confirms this, that the decision to desist from the deportation, was

influenced also by the Vatican visit of the Msgr. Andrea Cassulo. The US Secretary of State, Cordell Hull, did act through the Swiss ambassador, directing the attention of the Romanian government to the negative consequences of the deportation of the Jews. Richter tried to create discord between the Jewish protagonists of Transylvania and the Old Kingdom. Additionally he tried to intimidate through an article “The servants of the Jews”, which was published in the “Bucharester Tageblatt” of October 11, 1942 (\*165).

The message coming from the United States (to stop and desist from deportations) tallied with the wishes of the Romanian government not to tarnish its standing in case of an eventual victory of the Allied Powers. As such on October 13, 1942, they decided to halt the deportations (\*166). Not even the wearing of the “Yellow Star” by the Jews, originally decided for January 1943, was ever implemented (\*167).

As described above, the crucial moment when the deportations were suspended is between September 15 and October 15, 1942. The Jewish population of Arad was spared the deportation both to Poland and Transnistria.

\* \* \*

At the start of the year 1943, the attention of the Jews in Arad was drawn to a typical provocative action of the authorities. In the evening of February 9, 1943, a group of 24 people, mostly young ones, congregated in the dwelling of Mr. Juliu Weiss, to listen to a piano recital given by the young Robert Weiss and the pianist Marika Kardos. At a given moment a group of policemen broke into the apartment and arrested all the present ones, taking them to the police headquarters. The pretext of the detention was that the group supposedly fettered the victory of the Red Army at Stalingrad. In the course of the legal proceedings, the members of this group were accused of “plotting against the safety of the State”, and were sentenced to 14 months in prison. When the lawyers announced that they will appeal to a higher court, the reply was that in such an instance, the period of detention up to the appeal will not be taken into account as time served... After multiple intercessions, the detained - first the women and afterwards the men - were moved from the prison in Timișoara (where the conditions were far rougher) to the penitentiary of Arad. On July 9, 1943 the Appellate Court upheld the sentences. The members of that group were released on January 17, 1944, after those innocent people spent almost a year in jail.

**The activity of the Jewish Community under the Conditions of the Racial Persecution.**

Out of practical reasons, the Antonescian regime dealt differently with the community, than with the individual Jews. As one such example we cite the total expropriation of the urban Jewish real estate holdings in March 1941, while the real estate properties of the Community of Arad, were taken over only in April of 1943. Until that date the community could hold on to income generated by the renting of apartments in the building of the Fischer Eliz foundation. On the other hand some other buildings of the Community were seized, for example the Old Age Home on 17-19 Greceanu Street, the building on 22 Episcopiei Street, and the complex on the Seminarului Street, where initially the Jewish Lyceum was located. No intercessions, even through the judiciary, resulted in the ceasing of this abusive grab. The communities were left only with the two synagogues, the ritual bath, the places of ritual slaughter and the matzo factory.

Despite those willful acts the Jewish communities were able to continue their activity, due to the rational use of their internal resources. For example the Charity House and the Old Age House were amalgamated, the orphans got placed in private homes, but they did continue to receive 3 meals a day at the communal kitchen. The offices of the Community (which were moved 3 times) were merged with the local division of the Central Office of Jewish Affairs. The sick Jewish people, continued to be treated at the homes of the Jewish physicians, while the wealthier people contributed to the expenses. One such example was in 1942, the donation of the widow Sidonia Rainer (\*168). The baron Végváry Neumann Ferenc played a significant role in assisting the communal activities during the difficult times of the war.

The community managed to mobilize all the spirited vigor of the Jews from Arad, being led by people who were imbued with an exalted national conscience. Amongst them we have to mention the president of the Community Aladár Lakatos, its secretary Dr. Alfred Grossman, the active Zionists Filip Huppert, Dr. Alexander Herzog, as well as other active members like László Székely, Ármin Grünstein, Albert Sándor, Dr. Eugen Fischer, Eugen Tauszk, and many others.

**The Zionist Movement, the Repression and the Elements of Political Resistance in the Community in the years 1940-1944.**

The installation of the Gigurtu government in August of 1940 - preceding with just one month the start of the legionary-Antonescian dictatorship - coincides with the banning of all Zionist activities, as well as the political and communal Jewish organizations (WIZO, the Hakoah club, etc.). Additionally there was a reorganization of the communities and their administration through the Central Office of Jewish Affairs. This reinforced the absolute control of the authorities over the communal life of the Jews in the whole country ( and as such in Arad too).

The Bulletin of the Jewish Community, issued in the years 1939-40, had a positive role in preparing the young people to the events ahead of them. The Bulletin dealt with actual problems like the requalification, and readiness for the economic needs of the Yishuv (hachsara). The authorities could not entirely suppress the hubs of illegal organizations, formed by the Zionists or other Jewish groups motivated by a national consciousness. The primordial concern of these activities was to save the largest possible number of the refugees from other countries and to facilitate their emigration to Eretz Israel. The emigration was planned and organized by the Zionist center in București (clandestine), together with the local activists.

The boat Dorian II did leave in January of 1941, having on board a number of young men from Arad - Bornstein, Szekfü, the brothers Klein. This was facilitated by contributions from a number of well-to-do Jews from Arad, first of all the baron Véghváry Neumann Ferenc. He interceded for the inclusion into this group, of a number of Jewish people who were persecuted for “illegal” political activities, as well as Jewish refugees from Czechoslovakia and Poland who were interned in the Sulina camp. Amongst those from Arad, we do mention Meir Baram (Birnbaum), who lacked a “certificate” and as such had to falsely claim to be a refugee, in order to depart with the Dorian II. He was in the Habonim organization, and was at the “hachsara” in Hațeg. In Israel he became one of the founding members of the Maagan kibbutz, in the area of lake Kinereth.

The drive to emigration did continue in February 1942, with the leasing of the boat Struma, which was sunk in the Black Sea, with the loss of a large number of emigrants. The disaster of the boat Struma had big reverberations, it increased the difficulties of the work for continuity of the emigration, but it could not stop the Zionist drive. What was sought primarily was contact with the young people. The former Zionist activists Pista Krausz and Dr. Laci Háber do reveal that there were gatherings in the Ceala forest, in the neighborhood of

Arad. The Zionist activist David Dov remembers a successful assembly of 30 young people, organized by the Mizrahi, in order to commemorate the birthday of Theodor Herzl, in the winter of 1942-43.

It is of interest to contemplate the activity, under the conditions of the fascist dictatorship, of the “Gordonia” a Zionist workers youth organization. The last prewar national conference took place in Chişinău on April 27-30, 1940, and the activist Ezra Lasner from Arad was elected into the national leadership.

During the war, the activity was clandestine. The Jewish Youth Zionist movements operated under cover. Ezra Horesh (Lasner) remembers: “We did continue the Zionist work, even under the conditions of the illegality, but my being at a labor camp did create difficulties. At the end of 1943, I did run away and managed to get to Bucureşti. I was sentenced to death for the desertion, but I managed to avoid the massive roundups of the Romanian Security forces. In March 1944, together with my future wife Netty, we did board the boat Milca I, the first ship which departed after the sinking of the Struma. We did arrive to Istanbul, and were able to continue overland to Eretz Israel”.

The harshness of the Antonescian authorities hit first of all those Jews, who were considered dangerous, meaning the people who were suspected of being politically active. These aspects are manifest in the recollections of Pavel Birnbaum (formerly from Arad): “We did get acquainted with the rough methods of the Romanian police, when I was part of a group of 11 young people, arrested in the spring of 1941, under the pretext of possible communist activities. Others in this group were: Ladislau Qvit, Ştefan Lănczos, Ghita Wolf, Gheorghe Komlos, Ladislau Komlos, Soma Kluger, Gheorghe Hacker, Eugen Salamon and Marcel Fischler. They could not come across any proof, and we were set free, with the exception of Marcel Fischler, who was sentenced to 4 months in prison”. At the end of the summer in 1942, this group was again detained, and together with another 62 Jews from Arad, they were deported to Transnistria, most of them to the Vapniarka camp. From his narrative we do learn that upon the arrival 7 Jews were killed right away (Ştefan Merkle and Markus Köves amongst them). All of them suffered greatly, there were many illnesses (Marcel Fischler lost both of his legs), but most stayed alive and were later returned to Romania. Dr. Eugen Waldmann and Dr. Andrei Hersch, physicians from Arad, were also deported to Transnistria:

The most important activity of the Jews from Arad, was assisting the refugees. The first ones arrived in the fall and winter of 1939. Later hundreds of them came from Poland and Slovakia, as well as from Northern Transylvania in 1944. Haim Wurzel (Hanoar Hazoni) did describe in detail this humanitarian action of the young Jewish people from Arad: the setting up of reception

centers, the assigning of the refugees to the dwelling of the Jews, etc. This activity was described as well by Dr. Ferenc Deutsch in a chapter entitled "Details of the rescuing activity in Arad", which did appear in the tome "Tanuk vagyunk" (We are witnesses) edited by Erwin Gemeiner (Galili). Also worth to note are the recollections of Rafael Rosenberg (Razi) from Mediaș, who was delegated by Dr. Zissu, to organize the action called "Tiyul" (the walk) in the Arad area. These reminiscences are narrated in the volume of Baruch Camin (\*169), mentioning the help received from of Abraham Feig, Scharfstein, Weinberger and Kreiger. He also indicates that Mordehai Rössel, Shabtai Nissel, Haim Wurzel, Abramovici and Haia Vider were amongst his collaborators. The Gordonians from Arad: Ezra Lasner, Misu and Jehudit Cohen, Béla (Efraim) Mandel were known too for their fruitful, fearless and exacting activity.

One of the interesting stories of those days, is the transit through Arad of individuals from the Jewish Brigade, parachuted by the English Air Force, a fact which was known for a long time to only a few people. There is ample literature published in Israel on the training and activity of those parachuted. Such is the book "Hatzniha vehabriha" written by one of them, Baruch Camin, as well as the volume of the well known publicist Amos Ettinger "Tzniha Iveret" (the blind parachuting) (\*170).

On June 4, 1944, two men were parachuted in the Curtici-Pecica area: Dan Shaike (Trachtenberg) from the Nir-Am kibbutz, and Itzhak (Mano) Ben Efraim from the kibbutz Shamir (Galil). They managed to get to Arad, to the synagogue of the Orthodox Community. At the beginning they were looked upon with incredulity, because they claimed to be refugees from Hungary, but they spoke no Hungarian. They were sheltered in a storeroom of the ritual bath belonging to the Orthodox Community, and later were assisted to get to București. It was only much later that the real identity of Dan Shaike was discovered, Amos Ettinger did talk about him in a television show. He had distinguished himself in coordinating the Aliah to Israel of many Jews from Eastern Europe.

Shortly afterwards, on August 1, 1944, two other parachutists were dropped by the English Air Force, again in the Curtici area. They were Baruch Camin (Kamincker) and Dov Harari (Berger). The first one, coming from the same kibbutz as Dan Shaike, was sheltered in Arad under the same circumstances as those who did arrive on June 4. He recounted his adventures in the above mentioned book. In the years 1944-47, both Dan Shaike and Baruch Camin, did contribute to renewed emigration to Eretz Israel. Baruch Camin, on his return to Israel after the proclamation of Statehood, became a member of the second Knesseth.

The continuation of the emigration activity to Palestine, was possible in the year 1944, because of the partial forbearance of the Romanian authorities. Starting with the winter of 1943-44, the Zionist organizations in Arad, did participate in the Aliah action. Some young people from Arad did embark on the boats Marița I-II, Milca I-II and Kasbeh. A number of people from Arad were amongst those approximately 1000, who did leave in the summer of 1944, on the boats Moreno, Bulbul and Mefkure. The first two ones arrived safely to destination. On the other hand the Mefkure was sunk in the Black Sea, probably by a German submarine. Of all the 379 passengers only 4 did survive. The Mefkure casualties from Arad were: the members of the Stern family (Emeric, Eva and Fredi), Paul Bergman, the first spouse and the 2 children of the pharmacist Dr. Rényi (Margareta and Gheorghe), Hava Köves (the daughter of the well-known activist Böske Köves), Tibi Israel Stössel, the sisters Schleifer (Rachel and Jehudit), Meir Wexler, Nuși Frisch, Mordechai (Carol) Grosz, Itzhak Rotschild (from Gurahonț), Haia Bruder, Abraham Herstig, Haia Tsopper, Ibi Falkovics, Ofer Feldman, Jehudit Gotterer, Aron Ciobotaru and Dora Szalpéter. The tragedy of this ship was recounted in detail in the volume of Mordehai Rössel “**Tik Mefkure**” (\*171). Similarly Rafael Ben Shalom, who was later the Israeli ambassador to București, describes the tragedy of his family in one of the chapters of the volume “*Tanuk vagyunk*” (We are witnesses), edited by Erwin Galili (Gemeiner).

### **The Establishment & Functioning of the Jewish Lyceum (1941-1945).**

The exclusion of the Jewish pupils from all the State schools (in September 1940) did raise a new and difficult issue confronting the Jewish community and its leadership: how to assure the educational continuity for all those pupils. The private school ABC, under the leadership of the professor Sigismund Katz was born under those circumstances. An original pattern was created for another group of pupils: they did continue their studies in a private apartment, under the tutoring of the professors Ana Tauszk, Agneta Raab, Maximilian Rosenfeld, Ivan Berkovits. All of them did pass the year-end examinations at the Jewish Lyceum of Timișoara. In the year 1941, lei 1 million was donated to the Community by the industrialist Oszkar Dan (in fact the amount resulted from a successful deal with the manufacturer Ármin Stein) - with the purpose of generating the material basis of a Jewish Lyceum in Arad (\*172). Considerable efforts were directed towards assuring competent teachers.

The Jewish Theoretical Lyceum started its activity on November 21, 1941. At the onset it was only a school for boys, in the building of the Seminarului Street. Later the girl's Lyceum was launched too. The head of the

establishment was the chief rabbi, Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, and the principal of the girl's school was Mrs. Eva Balkányi.

The following teachers were active in the schools: Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld and Emil Kahan (Hebrew language, religious education and history of the Jewish people), Sigismund Katz, who did close down his ABC school (Latin language and philosophy), Eva Balkányi (Romanian and French languages), Agneta Raab (French and English languages), Tiberiu Rosman (mathematics), Dr. Loránt Deutsch (civic instruction), Dr. Achile Fălticeneanu, Dr. Emeric Wiener and Dr. Ladislau Haber (anatomy and hygiene), Alexandru Amigo (French and Latin languages), Dr. Ella Schlosser (German and French languages), Vasile Kardos (French language), Martin Nacht, Edith Kardos and Malvina Moise (Romanian language), Heini Teller (mathematics and physics), Dr. Joan Kalmár (civic instruction), Libertina Haimovici Nacht (natural sciences), Jacob Léb and Ștefan Löb (natural sciences), Josif Theti (geography and history), Viorica Szmuk (history), Eugen Czeisler and Gizela Lebovics (physics and chemistry), Emeric Stökl (chemistry), Cecilia Merlaub and Joan Spitz (drawing), Ștefan Schön (mathematics), Ignatie Goldzieher and Tiberiu Epstein (music), Rodica Novac (German and French languages), Egon Florian (Physics), Berti Rotschild (mathematics).

Ștefan Schön, Ștefan Stein and Alexandru Amigo did function as secretaries to the school.

The first crisis of the Lyceum was when in the spring of 1942, the building (located opposite of the Romanian Theological Seminary) was confiscated. The problem was solved by leasing the first floor of an apartment building on Main street, close to the City Hall. The girl's school did function on the same premises.

The members of the school board were: Eugen Tauszk (president), Aladár Lakatos, Dr. Eugen Gabos, Dr. Josif Ujhelyi, Oszkar Dán, Dr. Ioan Radó, Dr. Francisc Deutsch and Carol Kabos.

The lyceums were able to continue their activities, with a curriculum identical to that of the state schools. This was made possible by the support of the local school inspector Dr. Nicolae Giurchescu, as well as that of the other principals of the state high schools: Ascaniu Crișan (Moise Nicoară Lyceum), Florica Bucurescu (Elena Ghiba Birta Girl's Lyceum) and Vasile Suciu (Commercial High School). We have to mention that certain professors, like Mihai Păun, Joan Niciu and Eduard Găvănescu contributed to the activity of the Jewish Lyceum despite having teaching appointments at the State Lyceum Moise Nicoara. The year-end examinations, as well as the baccalaureate exams were held under similar conditions as in the State schools, and after the

conversion of August 23, 1944, all of these were acknowledged and legalized by the state authorities.

At the beginning of the 1944-45 school year, there was a clash between two opposing positions: the Zionist faction wished to maintain the integral functioning of the school, while many members of the school board and leadership of the Community, believed that under the prevailing circumstances it was not possible to assure the material basis for the continual operation of the school. It is worth mentioning that the daily Arad newspaper "Patriotul", in its November 1, 1944 issue, published both the call of the committee for the continuation of the school, as well as the announcement of the occidental rites community, that it was not possible to assure a safe material basis for the reopening of the Lyceum. Finally a compromise was reached, the Lyceum was preserved one more year, but it was on a reduced scale, only the first 4 classes, for boys as well as for girls. A new school board was elected, including 2 Zionists from the leadership of the occidental rites Community (Dr. Joan Kalmár and Dr. Francisc Deutsch) and 2 from the orthodox Community (Ştefan Krausz and Dr. Ladislau Háber).

We do remember fondly those who contributed to the initiating of the Lyceum and those members of the board, who as leaders guided the institution. We do express out heartfelt thanks to all those who worked selflessly contributing to the smooth running of the teaching process, to all the educators who departed with the passing of time, and are no more with us.

We see in front of us the familiar and well-known faces of the former pupils, who did leave us far too early forever. We hallow their memory which will stay with us forever:

**Deceased in Romania:**

**Péter Windholz**  
**Lili Lakatos**  
**Robert Schwartz**  
**Sanyi Schauer**  
**Dr. Jancsi Hirsch**  
**Tamás Messinger**  
**Lili Engel**  
**Janó Stein**  
**Misi Kohn**  
**Iván Radó**  
**Dr. Laci Weisz**  
**Tiberiu Hacker**  
**Josif Jakab**  
**Teri Steiner Roth**

**Deceased on the way to Israel:**

**Schatzi Rényi**

**Éva Köves**

**Éva Bruder**

**Károly Adalbert Grosz**

**Sami Schleifer**

**Tibi Israel Stössel**

**Pali Bergman.**

**Deceased in Israel:**

**Feri Berwald-**

**Laci Mayer - both during the war of Independence**

**Robert Valkó**

**Sanyi Lévy**

**Marika Fülöp**

**Kurti Kain**

**Kati Krausz**

**Kati Gidáli**

**Jacob Fritz Moskovitz**

**Bubi Mayer**

**Dr. Menahem Laci Hirsch**

**Dr. István (Pisti) Stein**

**Öcsi Dan Friedman**

**Yaron Bar Dayan (Iván Deutsch)**

**Öcsi Weisz**

**Judith Kesztenbaum Izsák**

**Anny Weisz Juval**

**Öcsi Márkus**

**Iván Mihály**

**Modi Friedland**

**Jancsi Kabos**

**Emeric Sachs**

**Deceased in other countries:**

**Andris Schwartz**

**Pityu Markovits**

**Gyuri Paszternák**

**Péter Temmer**

**Gyuri Braun**

**Dr. Csöpi Somló**

**Laci Lakatos**

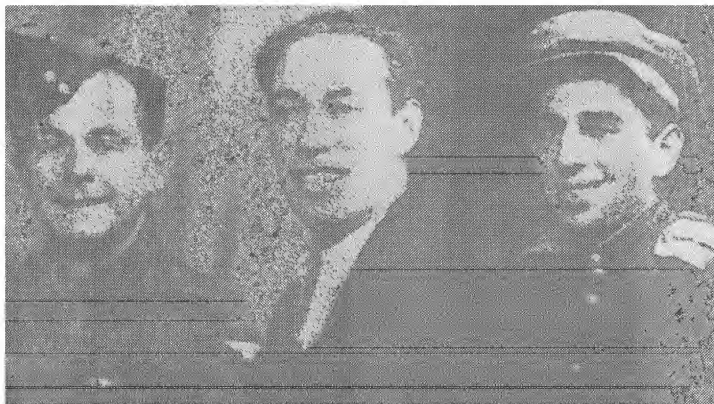
**Tibi Salamon**

**Laci Weisz**

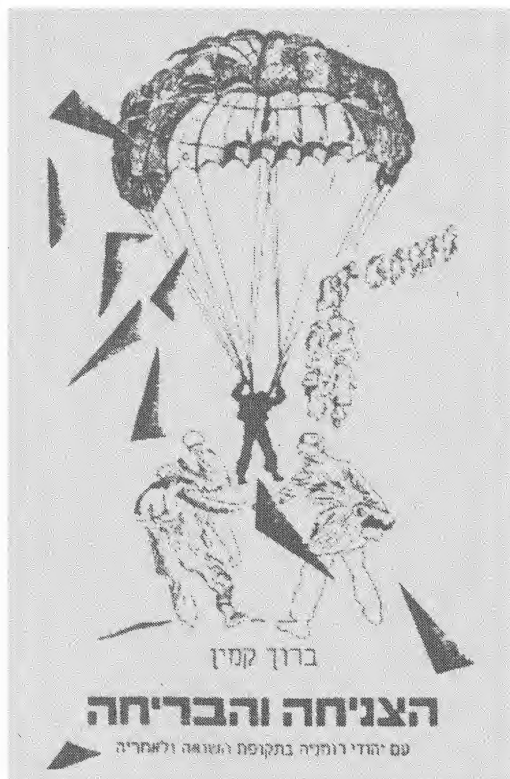
**Iván Kramer**

**Dr. Cornel Koralek**

**Laci Fleissig**



Baruch Kamin (Kamincher), parachuted into Arad in August 1944, sandwiched here in-between the photographs of an English soldier and a Jewish officer of the Soviet Army; he became one of the leaders of the "Briha" action after the war



The title page of the book "Hatzniha Vehabriha" (the jump and the shelter) by Baruch Kamin (Kamincher) who did parachute on August 1, 1944, in the area of Arad



"The man who brought into the country half a million Jews". About Dan Shaike, in the newspaper "Iediot Aharonot"



The title page of the book, "Tzniha iveret" (the blind jump) written by the Israeli author Amos Etingher; in it he writes about the exploits of Dan Shaike (Trahtenberg), who was parachuted in the Arad area on June 4 1944, during the Second World War

**The victims from Arad who perished with the boat MEFKURE**



Emeric Stern,  
Frida Stern  
and Frédi Stern



Paul Bergman



Hava Köves (Arad 1928)



Margareta and George Rényi



Israel Stossel (Arad 1930)



Meir Wexler (Arad 1925)



Rachel Schleifer (Arad 1936)



Iudit Schleifer (Arad 1933)



Nusi-Nina Frisch (Arad 1932)



Mordechai - Karcsi Grosz (Arad 1926)

### The Jewish Lyceum



The building in the Seminarului Street, formerly the Orphanage for Boys, and later The Jewish Lyceum (1941-42)



The assembly of the professors of the Lyceum, in the courtyard of the building in the Seminarului Street.

Standing from the left: ..., Stein Ștefan (Pisti), Léb Ștefan, Schön Ștefan, Amigo Alexandru, Lebovics Gizela, Malvica Moise, Löb Ștefan, Czeisler Eugen, Spitz Ioan.

Sitting from the left: Dr. Schlosser Ella, Katz Sigismund, Raab Agneta, Teller Heini, Dr. Schönfeld Nicolae, Tauszk Eugen (president of the curatorium), Téthi Josif, Szmuk Viorica, Kahan Emil, Kardos Ditta.



The front of the building housing the Lyceum on the main boulevard



The teachers sitting - from left to right are:  
Dr. Schlosser Ella, Kardos Ditta, Raab Ági, Szmuk Viorica, Moise Malvica, Lebovics Gizela,  
Kahan Emil.



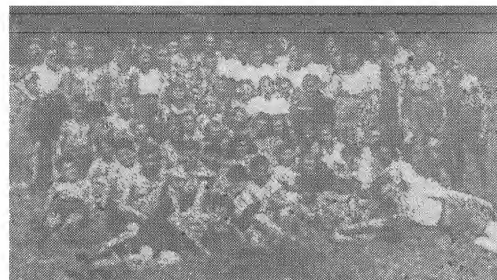
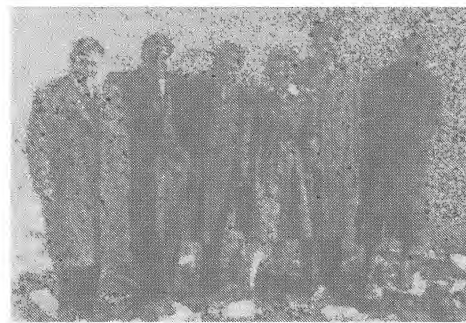
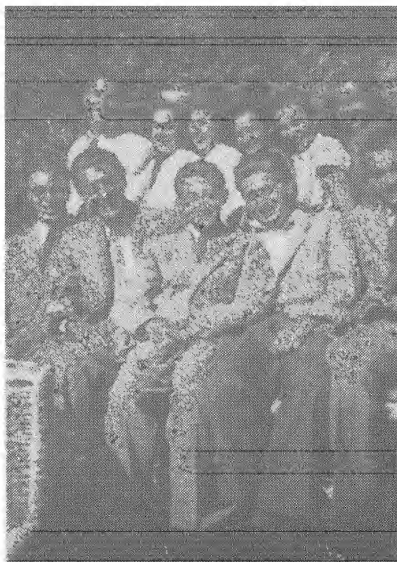
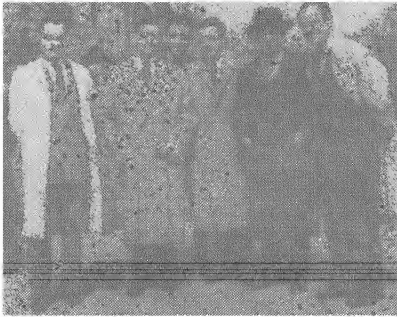
The first promotion of the Jewish Lyceum (1941-1942)



A group of pupils from the Jewish Girl Lyceum celebrating a collective Bat-Mitzva Festivity on Shavuot Day (1943)



Pupils from a class of the Jewish Girl Lyceum



## **Chapter 10**

### **1944 - A Year of Change and Great Jeopardy**

The major events in world history conducive to the defeat of the Nazi regime like the battles of Stalingrad, El Alamein, Kursk-Orel, the conquest of North Africa, the invasion of the Normandy, etc. they all had their reverberations within the Jewish community of Arad. The main thrust of the changes - irrespective of the anti-Jewish legislation - was the halting, deemed as temporary, of the planned deportations to Transnistria or to Poland. During this period, surviving Jews were even brought back from Transnistria, and emigration to Palestine was authorized. Nevertheless, until August 1944, the life of the Jews in Arad, was not made easier. On the contrary, the pauperization did continue, the obligatory labor was intensified and the economic exploitation did persist. In the period of April 1943 to 1944, there were no scary news and the morale of the Jews was bolstered by the successful Allied advances on all fronts. A major hazard was generated by the Hitlerist take-over of Hungary, on March 19, 1944. The following day it was already known in Arad that the German troops did penetrate into Northern Transylvania. Panic set in with the news of the mass confinement of the Jews into ghettos in Oradea, Makó, Szeged, etc. - all localities close to Arad. Waves of hundreds of refugees did arrive to Arad from Northern Transylvania, worn-out, tired and empty-handed, but lucky to have escaped. In Arad a group of young people like Mordehai Rössel, Haim Wurzel, and others, immediately set out to help these refugees.

The international situation was heartening due to the successes of the Anglo-American troops and the progress on the Russian front. The physical existence and salvation of the Romanian Jews were on everybody's mind, the more that the massive deportation of Jews from Hungary and Northern Transylvania, became common knowledge. The following event gained emotional and horrifying significance amidst the Jews of Arad: it happened in that time that an accidental explosion of a hand grenade on the shore of the Mures killed the young Péter Windholz, son of the physician Béla Windholz, and shattered the leg of his friend Emeric Kardos. There was no rational linkage between the situation of the Jews in Arad and this accident, nevertheless it reflects on the state of the mind of the people that it was perceived as such. Thousands mourned at the burial of Péter.

On August 23, 1944, the Romanian State turned away from its association with the Axis Powers, joining the Allied Powers against the Axis. This brought fighting in the streets of Arad, leading to the capitulation of the local German forces. If the German and Hungarian governments were not short

on time, and if the Russian armies, aided by the Romanian ones would have been slower in advancing - the events in September of 1944 would have ended in a major tragedy. Research published in Budapest in 1975, evidences how at the time, the fate of the Jews of Arad was decided in Budapest. The duplicitous stance of the government of the regent Horthy was determined partly by its clinging to the Hitlerite ally - and on the other hand by attempting to edge towards the Allied Powers (especially England), with the aim to try to salvage at least part of the territories occupied in the years 1938-41 (\*173).

The hesitating Hungarian government was pressured by the personal visit of the marshal Guderian into invading Southern Transylvania. On September 12, 1944, they advanced onto Arad - where the Red Army was supposed to arrive the following day. Three Hungarian divisions under the command of the notoriously pro fascist József Heszlényi penetrated through the defence line of the frontier, occupied Arad and advanced eastwards towards Radna. A certain number of the Jews were able to leave Arad before the arrival of the Hungarian troops, sheltering temporarily in Radna, Lipova, in Lugoj, in the Banat, some of them reaching even as far as Deva.

It was peculiar and perhaps providential, that the Hungarian forces, despite being superior both technically and in numbers compared to the Romanian forces (mainly the infantry trainees of the non-commissioned drill camp near Radna), were halted at Pauliș and north of Timișoara. The Hungarian occupancy of Arad lasted for 10 days (September 12 to 22, 1944). The newspaperman Mordechai Rössel, remembered those dreadful days in an article in the paper Uj Kelet. Despite assurances given by the Hungarian commanding officer (the lieutenant colonel Aladár Asztalosy) that nobody will be harmed as a consequence of the occupation, as of September 15, the anti-Jewish legislation existing in Hungary was expanded to Arad too. The leadership of the Community was invited to send in no time a delegation to the Fortress. Chosen to be members of the delegation were: the chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, the vice-president of the community Dr. Eugen Fischer, and the delegate of the Zionist organizations Dr. Ármin Gara. The delegation was instructed that: 1/. the Jews have to wear a distinctive yellow star and 2/. a Jewish Council has to be set up within 24 hours.

The following Jews were elected to be part of the Council: Dr. Schönfeld, Dr. Gara, Filip Huppert, Dr. Eugen Fischer, Acatie Eichner, Dr. Szöllösy, Dr. Alexandru Rácz, Josif Karácsonyi, Carol Márer and Dr. Josif Singer. Dr. Schönfeld suggested that people should avoid as much as possible circulating in the streets and one should try to prevent the concentration of the Jews in a ghetto.

Certain prominent Hungarian personalities - the Protestant bishop Argay, the mayor Dr. Széll and dr. Pavel Suchy - tried unsuccessfully to solicit the authorities on behalf of the Jews.

There was loss of life within the Jewish Community during that period. Some people were killed by the military authorities, others by armed gangs in the surrounding villages and finally there were also victims of a German aerial raid. Amongst those we mention: **Alexandru Weisz**, the cantor of the occidental rites community, **Nicolae Koch**, **Andrei Gábor**, **Ladislau Bizam**, the pharmacist **Béla Földes**, **Aladár Roth**, **Jacob Grosz**, **Géza Klein** and his spouse, and the architect **Weil**.



*Alexandru Weisz*

On the morning of September 19, the Jews of Arad started wearing the star of David. Drs. Schönfeld and Gara were directed by the commanding officer Asztalossy to appear in front of the police commissioner Toth, for further instructions. He requested to be provided within 24 hours with a list containing the name and addresses of all Jews. It was to be presumed that this meant the start of the internment in the ghetto. In this crucial moment Dr. Schönfeld, in an emotional address, asked the police officer to postpone this decision for a number of days, reminding him of the imminent Jewish New Year - Rosh Hashana. After some hesitation the request was approved. This postponement in forwarding the list of the Jews, may have contributed to their salvation; on the night of September 21 to 22, the Soviet and Romanian armed forces entered Arad freeing the city, while the Hungarian garrison retreated over the frontier. It is worth mentioning that during the last days of the Hungarian occupancy, the chief rabbi Dr. Schönfeld and his family were sheltered by the Greek-Orthodox bishop of Arad Alexandru Magheru and his brother.

It is of interest that in those days in September 1944, Adolf Eichmann the famous war criminal, was present in the Arad area (in New-Arad) with half a company of SS (\*174). During the police interrogation in Israel (1960-61) he acknowledged that his task was to evacuate a number of 10,000 persons of German origin. He claimed that he was successful only in saving the personnel of a German hospital. It is probably true that if possible, his crew would have contributed to the extermination of the Jews from Arad.

The 2-d World War, was closing down, however a new situation, very complex and loaded with new problems was about to start.



The monument in the Jewish Cemetery of Arad, commemorating the Jewish victims from Arad who perished in the Second World War

## **Chapter 11**

### **The Jews of Arad in the Period Following the War**

#### **a/. The Jews of Arad after August 23, 1944, and in the first postwar years.**

Emerging from the shadow of the Holocaust, the Jews in Arad were confronted with a rather complex situation. This period in Romania was marked by a power struggle, wherein from the very beginning, the Moscow-guided communists had a distinctive advantage. A coalition government was short-lived and as of March 1945, the communists took over de facto the governance.

Both the occidental rites community and the orthodox one, were in a precarious financial condition, due to the impoverishment of their constituents. During this period the general idea was to compromise, trying to suit both the interests of the Community and the requests of the authorities. The pauperization that had started during the fascist and Antonescian periods, escalated towards the end of the war, and continued in the first postwar years too. Who were affected most? First of all it was the people of those social classes who did loose their sources of income: artisans, minor merchants, the intellectuals of the so-called free professions, the dislocated rural Jews, clerical workers and those exposed to prolonged unemployment. Added to this were the young men coming home from the former labor camps, who could not support their families and were unable to adjust to a productive activity. It was an unstable period marked among other things with the passing of the Soviet soldiers through the city. There was no way of stimulating the economic activities wherein the numerous unemployed would have been able to be integrated in gainful employment. Added to these difficulties of the Jewish families, was the strain of aiding the refugees who were either returning to Arad, or were in transit to Northern Transylvania and Hungary. Amidst those were the Hungarian Jews liberated from the labor camps in the copper mines of Bor (Yugoslavia), the ones coming from the concentration and death camps in Germany, as well as those from Basarabia, Bucovina, etc. It is believed that some 12,000 refugees passed through Arad. All of them were in an appalling condition, some clad in rags, weakened, famished, others exhausted or ill. The Community did assist all of them, with the help of the JOINT and the International Red Cross. The delegate of the International Red Cross, Mr. Rosenthal, asserted in his report of June 14, 1945 (\*175), that the numerous Jewish repatriates and refugees were cared for with utmost concern. Starting from the Curtici frontier station, continuing to the Arad railway station and beyond, there were temporary shelters with sleeping facilities, health care and sanitary installations, as well as relief posts with clothing and food.

The slow elimination of the anti Jewish legislation began towards the end of the year 1944. At the same time the expropriated communal buildings started to be returned (as far as it was possible), together with some personal holdings. However, this did not improve the situation of the many Jews pauperized during the war.

This impoverishing of the Jews went parallel with their numerical increase. For those with interest in statistical data we notice that in 1946 there were 13,200 members in the community, an increase of 3,800 souls compared to 1930. Out of this total number 11,600 were local people and 1,600 refugees. 13% of the locals were indigent, as compared with 80% of the refugees (\*176).

Clearly the have-nots were unable to contribute to the Community finances, being themselves in need of support. An action was launched by an interim committee of the Jewish Community, the WIZO organization, the local Bnei Brith organization, including some wealthier private individuals. Without claiming a complete listing, we mention here a number of those who distinguished themselves in this action: Dr. Schönfeld, Alfred Grossmann, Pavel Grossmann, Dr. Tiberiu Rényi, Dr. Ladislau Háber, Ștefan Krausz, Ludovic Schwartz, Dr. Francisc Deutsch, the ladies Magda Weissberger, Clara Dan, and many others.

During this important transition from the dictatorship and anti-Jewish persecution to a democratic governance there was a weakening of the communal activities. This was due to the untimely death of Dr. Alexander Herzog, the illness of the previous president Aladár Lakatos (substituted on a temporary basis by Alfred Grossmann), etc. as well as to the lack of a defined perspective, correlated to the increasing monetary difficulties of the years 1943-44.

Inside the orthodox community, the influence of the Zionist constituency became preponderant, Dr. Ladislau Háber and Ștefan Krausz rose to be important members of the leadership. This new mood within the guidance, impacted favorably the contributions of the Orthodox Community to the development of the Jewish communal institutions in Arad. The result was manifested in contributions of lei 2 million apiece, for the Jewish school and the organizing of a food-kitchen for the poor.

The Zionist organizations were aware of the need to maintain good relations with the governing authorities - mainly in order to ensure the setting up of the "hachshara" (preparation) and "aliyah" (emigration to Eretz Israel) - and for this objective they tried to combine the ardor towards the Zionist aspiration with a harmonious loyalty to the Romanian State. Such a practical example was the Congress for Transylvania and the Banat of the **Zionist**

**Workers Party Ichud**, held in Timișoara on May 30 - June 2, 1946. At the Congress there were 12 delegates from Arad: Ludovic Gárdos, Dr. Ladislau Háber, Ștefan Krausz, Filip Huppert, Josif Karácsonyi, Martha Roth, Ludovic (Latak) Schwartz, Mayer Kahane, Desideriu Klein and his spouse, Emilian Müller, the wife of Dr. Ștefan Bányász and I. Weinerth. Out of these Filip Huppert was elected to be a member of the regional committee, while Ștefan (Avraham) Krausz became a substitute member. Dr. Ladislau Háber and Ludovic Schwartz were elected to the broader steering committee. In the forefront of the problems discussed at the Congress were the emigration to Palestine and the support of the fight for creating a Jewish homeland in the British mandatory Palestine. The Congress ended with the prophetic words of Dr. Ladislau Háber, evoking the imminence of the fulfillment of Zionist aspirations, underlining the fact that only in a Jewish homeland can the political ideals be realized and the anti-Semitism eradicated (\*177).

On January 15, 1945, within the occidental rites Community of Arad, a new interim leadership committee of the community was constituted. According to the guideline No.194/44 of the Union of the Jewish Offices of the Old Kingdom (an organization under the leadership of W. Filderman), Mr.A. Groszmann did invite all the political parties. Nevertheless, at the constituting assembly, the only participants were the delegates of the Zionist Parties and the Communist Party. An interim committee was elected, under the presidency of the pharmacist Dr. Tiberiu Rényi (he was not the official delegate of the communists, despite being a member of the Communist party). 3 members of the Zionist organizations were elected (Filip Huppert, Ludovic Gárdos and Pavel Grossmann), 3 members of the Communist party (Dr. Alexandru Szantó, Pavel Donáth and Gheorghe Ban) and 3 others who were not officially representing any political party (\*178).

Thus it can be asserted that the management of the Jewish affairs in Arad was entrusted to a coalition regime, an accomplishment which under the prevailing conditions, was confirmed to be the handiest. For the time being there were no directives from the Romanian Communist Party aimed at crippling the Jewish communal activities. As such, party members like Dr. Rényi, Dr. Josif Singer (the foremen), Dr. Al. Szantó, and other delegates in the leadership of the Community, were able to temporarily contribute to the constructive work. In the absence of such party directives, the delegates (especially Dr. Rényi) were able to be useful to the Jews from Arad.

The collaboration in the coalition of the Community leadership persisted despite the differences. In part they were due to the diverging viewpoints of the interested parties (the Zionists and the Communists). The Zionists - as manifested in the papers of the Congress - wanted to collaborate with the

authorities, but were unwilling to give up their ardent wish for the aliyah and the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine. The Communist side continually tried to neutralize or to control the Zionist propaganda activities. In 1945 the Zionists activists of the Mizrahi group, after a suspension of 10 years, started to publish again the Hungarian language paper "Hazatérés" (The Homecoming). It was no wonder that after issuing the first two editions, they were summoned to the County Committee of the Communist Party, and instructed to immediately desist from further publishing. On the other hand the monthly reissuing of the Bulletin of the Jewish Occidental Rites Community was permitted. The editor in-chief continued to be Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, but he was assisted as managing editor by the communist Dr. Alexandru Szantó, the vice-president of the Community. At that time the basis of collaboration was the persistence of a common platform - a strong antihitlerist stance. Numerous stimulating articles appeared on the pages of that lofty publication. In addition the readers were exposed to new horizons in a world emerging from the sufferings inflicted by the hitlerism and the barbarous war. In the November 1945 issue, there was a philosophical essay on the epoch by the writer Gheorghe Szantó, an article on two great Jewish artists living in the XIX-th century in Paris (the artist Rahel Bartou and the sculptor Iacob Guttman, born in Arad), a chronicle of the works of Ilya Ehrenburg and a glowing humanistic text by the Christian Orthodox clergyman Gala-Galaction.

The weightiest problem -which continued to build up during the years 1945-1948 - was the deteriorating financial situation of the Community. The rise in the outlays was induced by the constant arrival of a large number of refugees, former deportees and repatriates. On the other hand numerous small and medium income households were continuously enfeebled, thus reducing their possible contributions to the expenditures of the Community. Under these circumstances the leaders in financial matters of the Community (Carol Kabos, Ernest Schwarzberger) had to face constant difficulties. In the year 1947 the JOINT did contribute lei 383 million to the budget of the Community. Even so, the constantly receding incomes from the communal levies, did compell the Community to ask repeatedly for further contribution from the JOINT. Those requests were justified, nevertheless the JOINT had no budgetary provisions for them. All the same the JOINT contributed 40-50% of the expenditures and covered the deficits of the different institutions (\*179).

The **WIZO** was extremely enterprising in the years 1945-1948, due to the unflagging activity of Magda Weiszberger, assisted by Lilly Singer, Clara Dan, Bözsi Schwarz, Ella Berg - cashier, Kató Karácsonyi, Lili Ujhelyi-Pálfi, Dusi Háber, Lili Bornstein, Temmer Masa and other dynamic ladies. The commemorative almanac of the WIZO dating from the 7-th decade, indicates that in the postwar period Arad became central to the WIZO activity in

Transylvania and the Banat (\*180). The pivotal activities included assistance to the deportees returning from the camps, to the repatriates from Bucovina and to orphans from Budapest reaching Arad. The Day-center of the Women's Organization, which opened in 1945, had an equally important role in that task.

The activity of the “**OR**” chapter of the **Bnai-Brith** was revived after August 23, 1944. In the Arad chapter there were some 60 active members of the Community: the chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, Dr. Francisc Deutsch, Dr. Ladislau Háber, Fillip Huppert, Ștefan Krausz, Oszkar Dan, Jonel Friedland, André Székely, Károly Kabos, Károly Marer, Marci Kronowith, Dr. Miklos Jeremiás, Dr. Dezső Valkó, Dr. Paul Tèthi, Oszkár Szigeti, Arthur Schwartz, Izsó Szimányi, Sanyi Leipniker, József Moskovitz, etc.

The Jewish community of Arad was horrified by a tragic event, which took place on July 5, 1945. Two inebriated Soviet soldiers forcefully entered the home of the Salamon family, in the Dorobanților Street. After trying to extort some money, one of them shot to death the head of the family, Mihai (Miksa) Salamon, in full view of his wife and two children. The news of this event spread fast among the citizens, who came in droves to extend their condolences.

### **The Founding and Functioning of the Jewish Hospital (1947-1948)**

The creation of this worthy institution, deserves a specific chapter dedicated to its short life span. Far back in the XVIII-th century, at the start of Jewish communal life in Arad, one of the primary concerns was the medical care bestowed on Jewish people. In the beginning it was the prerogative of the Hevra Kadisha. In a previous chapter the medical ambulatory was already mentioned. It was set up in a building in the Duca Street, where different medical specialists functioned on a voluntary basis, giving care mostly to those who had no financial means. This proved to be unsatisfactory, especially for surgical cases, which required an institution with hospital beds. In 1943-1944, a temporary hospital was set up on the Dragalina Boulevard (opposite the former summer theater), endowed even with an operating room. Here the chief surgeon Dr. Adalbert Reich, the chief urologist Dr. Josif Ujhelyi, the E.N.T. specialist Dr. Eugen Waldmann, as well as many others did pursue their vocation in a productive manner. This setting was far from being satisfactory, and there was an obvious need for a larger and better endowed hospital, in a more proper locale.

On the September 27, 1945, meeting of the committee - the representatives of both communities being present - it was concluded that the foundation of a hospital with 60 beds, conceivably in a communal building, would need an initial outlay of about lei 80 million. This approach was

considered unworkable. Therefore, on June 29, 1946, the leadership discussed with dr. Costiner, the delegate of the JOINT, the possibility of taking over the "Therapia", a private sanitarium located in the Josif Vulcan Street, owned by Dr. Adalbert Windholz. The financial outlay for such a move was estimated to be about lei 6-700 million. The upkeep of the hospital was to be split evenly between the Communities and the JOINT. Shortly afterwards a lease agreement was signed with Dr. Windholz, stipulating that the buying price was to be determined later. On November 28, 1946, the first installment of lei 200 million was received from the JOINT (\*181). In the meantime it was concluded that for the opening of the hospital the sum of lei 860 million was needed, out of which lei 430 million was assumed by the JOINT. In order to shoulder the remainder of the amount, the committee started negotiating the sale of various communal possessions, in Arad as well as in certain villages in the county. By the end of the year 1946 the building was taken over and disinfected. The hospital started to function in the first months of the year 1947. Its reputation was established before long, both amongst the Jewish and the non-Jewish populace. Numerous destitute patients were treated for free.

One of the early outstanding actions was the prompt and efficient treatment extended to a group of people from Arad, involved in a grave motor-vehicle accident in the neighborhood of Oravița. Within a short time a first-aid expedition was set up, headed by the surgeon Dr. Béla Reich. They hastened to Oravița, assisted the work of the local hospital and organized the transfer of the wounded to the Arad hospital, for continuity of the care. The fatalities in that accident were Ernest Márton, Emeric Preisz and Esther Czeisler.

The proper functioning of the hospital was assured by the selfless, devoted activity of the outstanding medical staff. We do mention several of the doctors: Reich, Thau, Hersch, Téthi, Carol Kállai, Windholz, Radó, Háber, Waldmann, Ujhelyi, Róna, Josif Singer, and many others. The whole paramedical corps: nurses (like Mrs. Menczer, Melita, etc.), laboratory workers, technicians, clerks, kitchen personnel, etc. they all did contribute to the smooth functioning of the hospital, administered by Mr. Ludovic Stern.

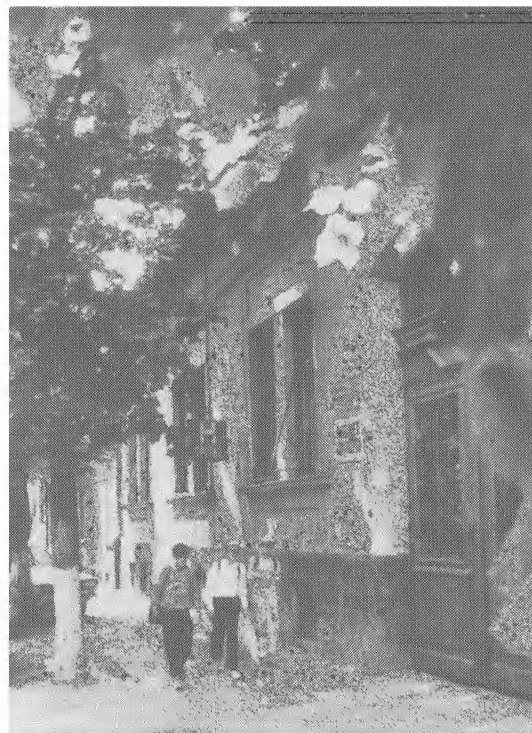
During the summer of the year 1948, the hospital was nationalized and ceased to function under the auspices of the Community.



The attendants at the Congress of the Ichud organization (Timișoara, 1945)



The medical ambulatory  
office in the Duca Street



The front of the Jewish Hospital  
in the Josif Vulcan Street

**b/. The conversion to communism. The decline of the Community in Arad. The period of mass emigration to Israel.**

The events that occurred internationally in Europe and on a national level in Romania, starting with the second half of 1947 and during the year 1948, were to impact greatly on the fate of the Jews of Arad and on the communities. It became evident that the destiny of the Jews of Arad was to be decided in Moscow. The whole orientation of a satellite country was determined by its location within the Soviet sphere of influence. Stalin decided that the Western powers will not let him expand further his empire, and he needed to consolidate the conquests of the years 1944-1947. As such the countries under Soviet domination, as well as the whole communist world movement, were thrusting to expand the "cold war" and to liquidate Western influences in the subdued areas. In the fall of the year 1947, the leaders of the communist parties from the countries under Soviet control, together with the French and Italian communists did assemble in a Polish palace and hatched the "Information Bureau of the Communist and Worker's Parties, and of the Warsaw pact (Cominform)". For Romania the plan of action started with the elimination of the Liberal Party from the government, and with forcing the abdication of King Michael.

In all the countries fated to become members of the "socialist camp", an ideological campaign was launched against the Western "decadent" influences.

That was the period when the State of Israel was founded. It is of special interest to pursue the evolution of the attitudes of the Soviet bloc towards the newly created state, and how the internal policies of the pro-Communist government of Romania concerning the Jewish problem were displayed. The Soviet Union was moved by geopolitical motives to encourage the creation of the State of Israel. Mrs. Golda Meir, who was the first Israeli envoy to the U.R.S.S. received an enthusiastic welcome from the Jews in Moscow. Shortly afterwards there was a shift in Soviet policies, and Zionism started to be considered an imperialistic ideology. A writing directed against Zionism by the Soviet (Jewish) writer Ilya Ehrenburg, was a defining moment of the new tendencies. It was followed shortly afterwards by the political trials, like the one against Slansky in Czechoslovakia (where the majority of the accused were Jewish), and later the prosecution of the nine personal doctors taking care of Stalin (all Jewish), accused of plotting to kill him... Anti-Semitism became predominant.

How did all these changes reverberate within Romania? After the resignation of King Michael, and his departing from Romania (December 1947), the governance was taken over completely by the communists

obsequious to Moscow. The Jewish communities were to experience almost instantly a new situation.

One of the first steps of the new regime was to nationalize the large-scale industries and the banks, as well as the smaller enterprises, to force the small artisans into cooperatives, to liquidate the private sector in most services (for example the pharmacies) and to expropriate (often in a truculent manner) a large number of housing. These measures did hurt primarily the affluent and middle-class Jewish people, the supporters of the communal institutions. The income of the Jewish Community did shrink accordingly. On July 8, 1948, the board of the Jewish Community of Arad, advises the JOINT (\*182), that the income derived from the community levies decreased with one third, compared to the previous year. During the second half of 1948, the board of the Community had to institute drastic changes: the merger of the Charity House with the Old Age Home (abrogating the original statutes) in one of the buildings formerly expropriated and now returned to the Community, major reductions in the administrative personnel, etc. The temporary budget for the second semester of 1948 projected the income of lei 511 thousand (the new currency after the monetary stabilization), out of which only lei 120 thousand were covered by the communal levies. The JOINT was to contribute lei 216 thousand, the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania lei 50 thousand, and the rest was to be netted from the real estate rents (the Community was left with only 3 buildings). The moneys projected for the Food Kitchen dwindled by almost a half, and the number of people receiving meals decreased to 260. Institutions of major importance - like the Hospital and the School - were nationalized during the summer of 1948. At the end of 1948, the JOINT - which was considered to be an "American" institution, despite the fact that the communist regimes were indirect beneficiaries - was compelled to cease its work in Romania. Thus did disappear the last institution which had helped to maintain and balance the budgets of the Jewish Communities.

The years 1948-49 witnessed the mandated cessation of the Zionist activities in Romania, and as such in Arad too. Before that, there was an important event in May 1948. It was a crowded gala get together in the main hall of the Cultural Palace, celebrating the proclamation of the State of Israel. This joyful occasion is happily remembered by the Jews of Arad. The above mentioned Anti-Zionist writing of Ilya Ehrenburg was evidently inspired by Stalin. Shortly afterwards "The Resolution of the Romanian Worker's (Communist) Party concerning the National Question" was issued. It started the battle against the "bourgeois nationalism", and one the manifestations was the fight against the Zionist organizations. In Arad as well as in all other places the local leadership of the Jewish communities was to be composed only of "verified" people, meaning party members. They were instructed by the County

Communist Party organization on how to manage the Jewish Community, mostly in opposition to the real interest of the people.

Nevertheless, the Zionist activity did continue, mostly amongst the younger generation. The local offices of the Gordonia, Dror Habonim, Mizrahi and Hanoar Hazioni did persist in their fruitful activity. The office of the Hanoar Hazioni organization was in the center of the city, in the Eminescu Street. 40-50 young people did habitually congregate there, attending talks about the settlements of the Palestinian “yishuv” and various cultural programs. The running of this center was assisted by Mr. Itzhak Artzi from Bucharest - presently a well-known public personality in Israel. The most active local people were: Ö. Steiner, Haim Wurzel, Judith Benari (Leipnicker), Rotem (Roth) Pali. (\*183). Two members of the local Noar Hazioni Organization were elected in the central leadership of the movement: Deutsch Adalbert (Dicsi) and Marton Gyuri. During the summer of the years 1945-1948, camps (moshavot) were organized in different localities in Transylvania (one was in Toplitza), offering diversified programs in preparing those who were to reach Eretz Israel. It was clear that in those years, this enthusiastic group of young people had spawned a wave of new emigrants to Israel. Judith Fülöp (Stössel), Toma Paler, etc. did leave in 1946 assisted by the Aliat Hanoar (emigration of the young). In 1947 a group from the Hanoar Hazioni movement were sent to Oradea for preparation (hachsara) in purpose to Alia. Finishing the program the whole group emigrated to Eretz Israel: Öcsi Steiner, Baruch Klausner, Agi Klausner, Laci Mayer, Tibi Csillag, Bubi Adler, Pavel Vas, Samu Scheiber, Wili Mátyás. A part of them joined the Kfar Glückson kibbutz and are still members of it. (\*184). The young people belonging to the Gordonia, usually congregated at the headquarters of the Ichud on Main Street, the locale being used by the Dror Habonim organization too. Between the many young activists of Dror Habonim we mention: Micu Gárdos, Gyuri Róna, Laci Róna, Dor Ben-Zion (Ştefan Zádor), Lajos Grün, Pauli (Stössel) Bartov, Gershon Neumann, Géza Weinert, Géza Löwy, Kálmán and Miriam Schönbrunn, Shoshana Hecht, Emil Hecht, Kati Breier, Judith Gárdos, Tibi and Nora Fridman. The central organ of the Gordonia did send “shlihim” (emissaries) to train the local young people. The one from Bucharest was Josif Fridman, another came from Timișoara, Francisc Weinberger - the future husband of Nusi (Sara) Frisch. In the winter of 1947/48, another group of some 20 young people from Arad did embark on the aliyah (amongst them Sara Frisch) (\*185).

**The young members of the Hanoar Hazioni organization - 1947**



Klausner Öcsi, Róna Gyuri, Mayer Laci, Fridman Öcsi, Max Ivan, Scheiber Samu, Rubinstein Baby, Vas Pali, Mittelman Karcsi, Mátyás Wili, Roth Páli, Klausner Ági, Weinert Géza, Steiner Öcsi, Csillag Tibi, Messer Gyuri, Márton Gyuri, Illés Anuska, Scheer Baby, Fülöp Judith, Gombó Judith, Sternberg Noemi, Leipniker Judith, Schwartz Hédy.



A group of young Zionists from the Gordonia organization - Arad 1941: from left to right: Ezra Lasner, Mordechai (Carol) Grosz, Icu Rosenwasser, Ladislau Grün, Gheorghe Pilisi.

The former Zionist activist Judith (a.k.a. Rozsdás) Leipnicker (Benari), recalls that even during those difficult years the Zionist movement was not blotted out. Even after the closure of the Zionist locales in the fall of 1948, the members of the organizations continued to meet on a regular schedule, in order to exchange information about Israel and the prospects of an aliyah. Her house was a regular meeting place for 10-15 young people, not only from the Hanoar Hazioni organization, but also from the Tora Umlaha (e.g. Teurerholtz, Bérczi) and Dror Habonim (like Toma Weiner). All of them managed to emigrate together to Israel in 1958. It was revealed that just days after she left, the security organs were searching for Judith, and her arrest was thwarted only by this fortuitous concurrence.

The former chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae (Josif) Schönfeld recounted that in the years 1948-1958, young people were gathering in a locale in the building of the Jewish Community of Arad under the pretext of meeting for a religious holiday. In fact these assemblies were used to maintain the spirit of Jewish closeness and solidarity. These gatherings, lead by the chief rabbi of the city, mustered usually 20-30 young people from both communities, coming from all social strata. They did relay the Zionist message to most of the Jewish people in all the boroughs of Arad, keeping alive the hope that the ominous present will pass. Hundreds or even thousands of young and older people in Arad thus dreamed of the future aliyah to the State of Israel.

Reviewing the communal aspects one finds that the first communist president of the occidental rites Community was the pharmacist Dr. T. Rényi. In December 1947, during the meeting of the managing board, he proposed a campaign to oppose the general tendencies of emigrating to Israel. The discussion revealed that the majority of the board approved this idea, but it was never implemented (\*186).

The split in the board of management persisted and even intensified after May 17, 1948, when the physician Dr. Josif Singer became its president. He proposed to halt all forms of political subventions, targeting in fact the work of the Zionist organizations. Despite strong opposition on the part of Dr. Francisc Deutsch, who at the time was also a member of the leadership of the National Union of the Jews from the Banat and Transylvania, on the July 19, 1948, in the meeting of the board, all political subventions were removed from the budget (\*187).

The deciding moment in yielding to the yoke of communism occurred on the occasion of the September 12, 1949 meeting of the managing board. Presiding that meeting was a certain Bacalu, the delegate of the CDE (Jewish Democratic Committee) from București. Dr. Josif Singer was retained as the

president, but only those accepted by the CDE could stay in the managing board, like the secretary, Radu Schillinger. All pro-Zionists were removed from the board.

In the year 1948 the 2 Jewish Communities in Arad were coerced into fusion. The practical outcome of this “consolidation” was that the officials of the 2 communities had to work in the same locale, under the same roof. The secretaries arranged the day-to-day work. The ecclesiastical institutions (synagogues, ritual bath, cemeteries) continued to be administered on a separate basis. In the years 1950-1969 the secretary of the Community was Lili Schreiber, a perennial party activist. Changes for the better occurred in 1964, when the chief rabbi Dr. Moses Rosen took over the leadership of the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Romania. The Arad Community had installed a managing board composed of 3 individuals from the prior neologues and 2 from the past orthodox. Adalbert Reich became chairman, Desideriu Gottlieb vice-chairman and Desideriu Nack functioned as secretary and chief accountant. Those individuals constituted the leadership for a number of years. Later other chairmen were involved too, we do mention M. Jakobovits, Paul Weisz, etc.

Ing. Ștefan Löwinger was for a long period of time an efficient and dedicated chairman of the Community. He passed away in January of 1998. His successor as president of the board is Ing. Ioan Schlesinger managing the business of the Community with the selfless help of a smaller group. The chief accountant is Mr. Hartmann. The board operates properly the remaining institutions, like the Old Age Home and the Food Kitchen. That establishment is managed by Mrs. Julika Gulyás, assisted by Eva Löwinger, the widow of the former chairman. That locale is used in the yearly celebration of the Passover Seder, with a communal participation, in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and religious tolerance. Recently a club is also functioning in the building.

Recalling the events of the year 1948, we have to mention the repressive actions launched by the Communist Party: the seizure of the archives of the Zionist organizations and the closure and sealing up of the locales of the Zionist associations, including the places of the Ichud Party and the Mizrahi organization. We also have to specify the cessation of the sports activity of the Sparta Club (formerly Hakoah), where anyway the only remaining functional section was football. The Bulletin of the Community was also terminated by the authorities. The CDE (Jewish Democratic Committee) had a leadership composed by individuals completely enthralled by the Communist Party. Consequently the CDE monopolized all political activities of the Jewish communes. The CDE governed directly the communities, both locally, and by

way of the Federation of the Jewish Communities in Bucharest. They did start a vast campaign against the emigration to Israel.

However, the official political Romanian stand was again ambiguous. On one hand all the political organizations controlled by the Party, exerted maximal pressure on Jewish individuals, against the path of emigration. On the other hand on May 3, 1950, all the Militia (police) offices announced, that they are open for registrations, to ask for a passport in order to leave the country. This started a real flood of applications, and part of them was approved. A mass emigration to Israel was underway with 2-3000 passengers leaving weekly on board of the boat Transylvania.

On the occasion of the January 1959 meeting of the leadership of the Federation of the Jewish Communities, it was concluded that the campaign of information against the emigration to Israel was a failure.

At any rate in Bucharest and higher up in Moscow, dark clouds of repression were gathering against all Zionist activities and against everyone manifesting Jewish ideas.

The legal emigration was halted after the year 1951. Under those circumstances the "Briha" (refuge) action started in 1945, did continue to help the illegal emigration of the endangered Jews, as well as that of the young "halutzim". The following activists distinguished themselves in assisting the illegal action: Haim Wurzel, Dr. Ladislau Haber, Ștefan (Avraham) Krausz, Maximilian Marer, Ștefan Szende, the chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld, Magda Weissberger, Friedrich Reisz, Lili Bornstein, Ludovic Gárdos and Iosif Wohlberg.

In a conversation with **HAIM WURZEL** he recalled the existence of a secret shelter on the Dragalina Boulevard, kept for those young people who wanted to emigrate. Numerous fake documents were arranged for them, and the "connections" to the Police were actuated in order to obtain a fictitious order of expulsion. In the legal action brought later against Haim Wurzel, the main charge originated from this activity - resulting in a 5½ years jail term. He was released only in 1960, when he finally could leave for Israel.



Haim Wurzel, a leader of the "Briha" (Shelter) action in the Arad area, after the end of the Second World War

The same action netted a jail term for David Dov too. Towards the end of the year 1949, the Zionist operative Dr. Ladislau Haber managed to facilitate the clandestine border crossing to Hungary of the activists Filip Huppert, Maximilian Marer and Ștefan Szende. He could not manage to escape himself

(spending 4½ years in jail). Ștefan Krausz, Friedrich Reisz, Magda Weissberger, Lili Bornstein, Ludovic Gárdos and Josif Wohlberg shared the same fate. In the year 1953 the chief rabbi Dr. Nicolae Schönfeld was arrested for “high treason”; in the absence of any proof, he was accused of “hostile agitation”, Zionist activities and assisting the aliyah.

The first wave of aliyah was temporarily halted in the year 1952. During the period 1947-1956, approximately 8,000 Jews did leave Arad, most of them in the years 1950-52. Numerous Jews did lose their jobs after applying for emigration, and many of them had to wait for long years to have their aspirations fulfilled.

The above figures proved beyond doubt the failure of the action against the emigration of Jews to Israel. This failure terminated the rationale of the so-called Jewish Democratic Committee, which soon after ceased to exist.

In the years 1954-56, after the death of Stalin and the resulting changes in international relations, the emigration did start anew, but the pace was slower. In 1958 there was an announcement of the Militia (police), that those interested in emigration can apply again. A large number of applications were forwarded, and numerous people were able to leave. This new wave of emigration was temporarily halted by a decree on February 26, 1959. In the years 1960-64 the emigration restarted, and about 3,000 more Jews did leave from Arad. The decrease of the count of Jews in Arad reflects the continual stream of emigration. The census of the year 1956 counted 5179 Jews in Arad. It is possible that the figure underestimates the real tally, because it represents only those who declared themselves to be Jewish. By the year 1966 there were left only 1862 Jews in Arad. Nevertheless, the Encyclopedia Judaica, edited by the Beit Hatfutsot in Tel Aviv, reckons at 4,000 souls the Jewish population of Arad. In 1993, the chairman of the Jewish Community in Arad opined that there may be 450-500 Jews left in the city. By 1995 this number decreased to only 350. In 2000 there are less than 300.

The mass exodus of the Jews to Israel in the 1950-s, did not cripple completely the cultural and spiritual life of the Arad community. We do point out that a Yeshiva (an institution of Talmudic studies) with 56 students, was established in 1955, under the most difficult conditions of those times. It was guided by the chief rabbi Dr. Josif Nicoale Schönfeld and supported by the chief rabbi of Romania, Dr. Moses Rozen. Until the year 1956, this institution had no support whatsoever from the central or local Jewish Democratic Committee, and was thoroughly neglected by the authorities. The improvement came after 1956, when a delegation of 4 USA rabbis, on a fact-finding mission to Romania, visited Arad also. The Romanian authorities desired to mend their image abroad, and as such rendered an improved situation to the delegation.

The chief rabbi Dr. Rozen did accompany the delegation, and describes the visit in his volume "Dangers, Trials, Miracles" (\*188): "Thursday, we arrived to Arad on a special flight. We do enter an imposing building (on November 7 Street, today called Episcopiei Street), accommodating a synagogue and a lecture hall, where over 50 students, sat at brand-new benches and studied. The mess-hall had new tableware, the dormitories had new furniture, it seemed that the whole Yeshiva came alive, like in an oriental tale. The building used to be property of the Community and had an antiaircraft unit installed after nationalization. That is gone now, and the Yeshiva was installed in record time. For a long time the students did toil under miserable conditions, slept in wretched chambers, but continued to study hard, day and night. Presently, like in a beautiful dream, they have clean rooms with bathrooms, a civilized lecture hall, well-served meals. Obviously I did inform the guests about how these things had occurred. They did simulate utter satisfaction. The final result was that the Yeshiva continued to stay in the same locale, and functioned properly until 1966. At that time we closed it down, because in the mean time all students and melameds did leave for Israel".

The dwindled group of Arader Jews were shaken by the arrest of the Paszternák family in the year 1961. They were accused of: "Zionism, Zionist propaganda, Anti-State activity". Marci, the head of the family was sentenced to 6 years in jail and confiscation of property by the military tribunal of Timișoara. His son Gheorghe and his daughter Erika were condemned likewise. The family was set free through an amnesty, but not after having served in jail for 3 years (Erika), respectively 4 years (Marci) and 5 years (Gheorghe).

Romania started to establish better relations with the West, and especially with the USA. This coincided with positive changes in the attitude towards the Jewish population. In January of the year 1964, the Federation of the Jewish Communities of Romania was reorganized, and the chief rabbi Dr. Rozen, as president of the Federation was able to replace those 7 members of the leadership, who used to be too subservient. Thus the anti-religious and anti-Zionist orientation within the Jewish communities was discontinued; it was even possible to start certain spiritual educational institutions, of the "Talmud Torah" type. After a long suspension, the JOINT was able to restart certain activities in 1967 in Romania. The generous help of the JOINT ( \$4,25 million yearly) made it possible to provide for 11 kosher food kitchens in Romania, one of them in Arad. Likewise one of the existing 3 old age homes, operates in Arad. It functions in the same building as the food kitchen, securing meals of a proper quality for the older ones, for a reduced price to many of them.

The Jewish community of Arad will celebrate in 2017 its 300-th year of existence. It stays extant in the hearts of the people who had lived in Arad and likewise in the descendants, in Israel as well as in the Diaspora.

Thousands of former residents of Arad are living presently in the state of Israel. Some of them were amidst those young people - some of them not so young - who made the ultimate sacrifice to ensure the existence of the state of Israel. We mention several names of those who gave their lives for the defense of the land: **Francisc Berwald, Ladislau Mayer, Jehuda (Ioan) Sugár, Zion Baron (Baumer), I. Fischman, Ladislau Havas, Robert Schwartz, Israel Glück.**

We consider it important to indicate that numerous individuals originating from Arad, made meaningful contributions to the consolidation of the state of Israel. The register is long and certainly incomplete. We begin with: Iosif Sinai (Szegfü), Itzhak (Dezsö) Doron (both operated as “shlihim” of the Sochnut in South America), Itzhak Peleg (Pollák) and his wife Malca (Csori), Zeev Harel (Herschkovits), Menachem Adler (originally from Zerind), Aliza Gur, Asher Baron (Banner) and his wife Sara who contributed to the foundation and consolidation of the kibbutz Kfar Glückson (close to Pardes Hanna) - a settlement which celebrated its 55-th official birthday in 1994.

Furthermore mention should be made of the followings:

- Amos Salamon (the son of the untiring president of the sports club Hakoah, Béla-Ignatie Salamon), one of the leaders of the Solel Boneh construction company.
- Eliezer Armon (Bubi Veres), a fighter in the Palmach, and later Israeli ambassador to numerous South American countries.
- Meir Samir (L. Bornstein), the son of the community activist from the forties Alexandru Bornstein, who at a time was the Israeli delegate to the UNESCO, and who worked for a long time in the Israeli Ministry of the Exterior.
- Peter Hofmann, formerly officer in the Palmach Navy, who did steer numerous boats with illegal immigrants to Eretz Israel.
- Ezra Horesh (Lasner), upper echelon police officer for many years.
- Jehuda Meital (Mittelmann), upper echelon officer in the Army.
- Joel Dan ( the son of Oszkar Dan), upper echelon officer in the Israeli Air Force, and later pilot in the civil aviation.
- Josif David, likewise an Israeli Air Force officer.

- Dr. Reuven Tal ( the son of Dr. Ernest Thau), a graduate of the Haifa Technion, and a respected specialist in the aeronautical industry.
- Dr. Leopold Goldschmidt, for decades a valued pediatrician in Tel-Aviv.
- Dr. Josif (Nicolae) Schönfeld, our former chief rabbi, who was active in Israel as a teacher, legal scholar and later as a scientist at the Haifa University.
- Haim Wurzel, active within the government.
- David Dov, active for many years in the management of the Otzar Hahayal Bank (the Soldier's Bank).
- Dr. Zeev Beniamin (Ladislau) Haber, a well-known pediatrician in Tel-Aviv.
- Alice Rosen and Ada Monostori, both gifted publicists.
- Mordechai Rössel, writer and well-known publicist.
- Dr. Efraim (Feri) Deutsch, lawyer, former president of the Hitachdut Olei Hungaria in Israel.
- Alfred Friedland, engineer, in charge of an important appointment at the Electrical Utility Works, was active in the national leadership of the Bnei-Brit.
- Prof. Dr. Eduard Lutwák, attending surgeon at the Hadassa Hospital, Jerusalem.
- Dr. Julia Berger (Székely) and Dr. Toma Radványi, directors of Kupat Holim sections (Polyclinal), Dr. Bréger Ladislau, radiologist in Kupat-Holim.
- Dr. Thomas Gordon (Ujhelyi), well-known attending urologist in Haifa.
- Otto Salamon, engineer, in the management of the Sultam enterprises.
- Lea Hayat (Aniko Berg), branch manager in a Haifa bank.
- Joan Kabos and Joan Schwartz, engineers, both chiefs of section in the Ministry of Construction ( the later being the only individual from Arad to receive the decoration "National Labor Medal").
- Magda Weiszberger was the chairperson of the Hungarian section of the national WIZO organization.
- Moshe Zohar (Glanz), was a member of administrative management of the schools in the Haifa-Hadera area.
- Dov Tabori (Teuerholz) - a hazan (cantor) of international reputation.

- Modi Friedland, artist and teacher of ceramics.
- Gheorghe Márton, chemical engineer, internationally well-known specialist in brewery.
- Gheorghe Hirsch, mechanical engineer at the Sultam enterprises.
- Pavel Rotem (Roth), chemical engineer at the Frutarom enterprises.
- Andrei Háber, zootechnical engineer, researcher at the Israeli Veterinary Institute.
- Gabriel Singer, chemical engineer at the TAL enterprises.
- Erwin Weisz, land survey engineer.

Approximately 300 of the former pupils of the Jewish Lyceum of Arad, live presently in Israel. In the year 1971, on the occasion of the 30-th anniversary of the foundation of the school, there was the first reunion in Haifa with the participation of approximately 80 former teachers and students.

Ten years later in 1981, about 100 participants to a reunion congregated at the Bnei-Brit House in Haifa.

At the 1986 reunion in the garden of the Physician's House in Haifa, there were 270 former alumni and professors, amongst them Mrs. Cecilia Merlaub, who came from Paris.

In 1991, at the 4-th reunion celebrating the 50-th anniversary of the Jewish Lyceum, 350 people were present, out of which almost 80 came from abroad. Dr. Radu Homescu, the Romanian ambassador to Israel (himself originally from Arad) did participate at this meeting. On the premises of the Bnei-Brit House in Tel-Aviv, those present were hailed by: ing. Alfred Friedland, the former chief rabbi Dr. N. Schönfeld, the former teachers Eva Ivanir (Balkányi) and Tiberiu Roman (Rosman), ing. Ștefan Löwinger (at the time chairman of the Arad Community), Dr. Iván Rosenfeld, Emeric Kardos and Rita Fălticeneanu. The festive oration was offered by Dr. Thomas Gordon, who asked for a minute of remembrance to honor the memory of the deceased leaders, teachers and pupils of the institution. On that occasion a brief history of the school in print was also distributed.

The next reunion was held in October 1996, and lasted for 3 days. The first day was used for a trip to the Golan Heights, which made a lasting impression on the participants. The gathering itself was held on the second day, in the Kfar Maccabi in Ramat Gan. There were about 300 participants, out of which 60 came from abroad. The assembly was opened by Otto Salamon, who on behalf of the organizing committee greeted the participants. The keynote speaker was once again Dr. Thomas Gordon. As on past occasions, there was

one moment of silence, a homage to those who had passed away. In the address Dr. Gordon eulogized the figure of Dr. Josif (Nicolae) Schönfeld, the former principal of the Jewish Lyceum, and the former chief rabbi of Arad. He had passed away since the 1991 reunion, an occasion which was enhanced by his presence. The meeting was an opportunity to distribute the book concerning the history of the Jews in Arad, which was published just before. Written in the Romanian language, it records the chronology of the most important events in the dignified past of that community. On that occasion it was decided to translate the publication into the English language.

Prof. Eva Ivanier-Balkányi, the former principal of the Girls Lyceum, was greeted with respect and affection. She saluted those who were present, and in her emotional remarks, evoked reminiscences of the school days of yore.

Toma Garai gave a speech in the name of the former pupils.

The 3-d day of the reunion was spent at the Kibbutz Maagan, on the shores of the lake Kinnereth. It was dedicated to the traditional “lángos day”, a much appreciated recurrent feature of these meetings.

Aside from the reunions organized by the alumni of the Jewish Lyceum, there were also occasional meetings of “those originating from Arad”. These gatherings were a regular feature in the period 1960-1980. One of the most successful ones was organized by Miklos Szabó and Arthur Schwartz in the garden of the Ramat Aviv Hotel, with the participation of some 700 persons. The last such reunion was organized by Kató Braun in Netanya in 1988, and it was quite a success.

All those meetings were nostalgic events, but they also revealed the multiple contributions of the people from Arad to the growth of the State of Israel.

**The meeting in the year 1971**



From the left:  
Dr. Deutsch Loránt, Malvica Moise, Dr. Gordon Thomas, Dan Oscar, Dr. Schönfeld Nicolae,  
Dr. Deutsch Francisc



### The meeting in the year 1981



The presidium:

Dr. Deutsch Loránt, Dr. Schönfeld Nicolae, Dr. Gordon Thomas, Malvica Moise, Krausz Avraham



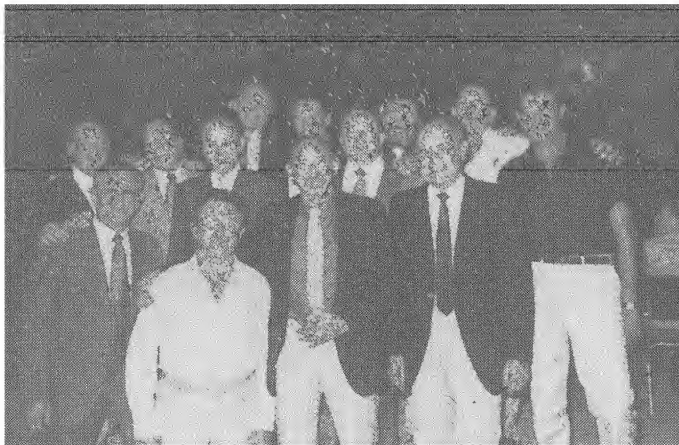
The audience

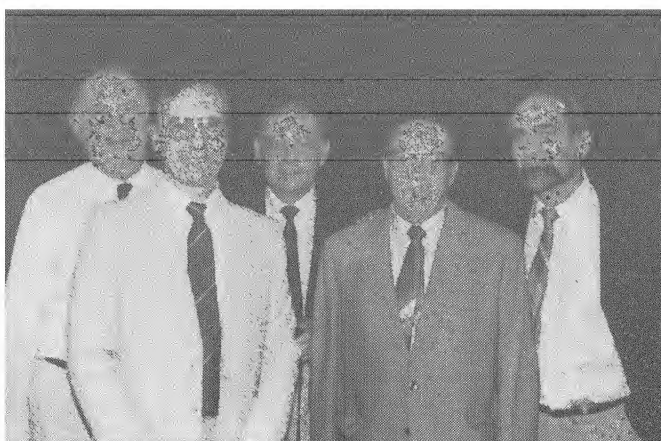
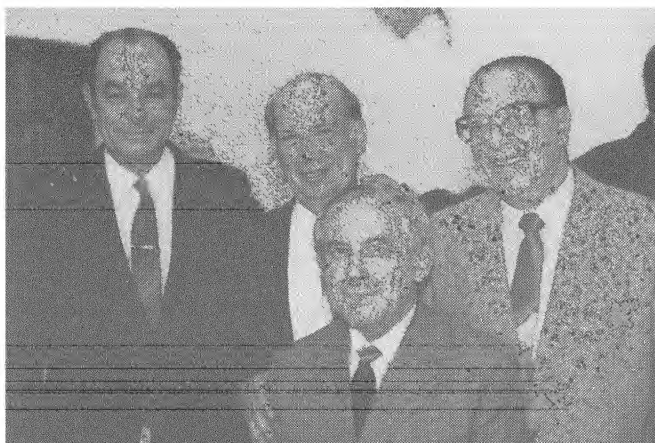
**The meeting in the year 1986**

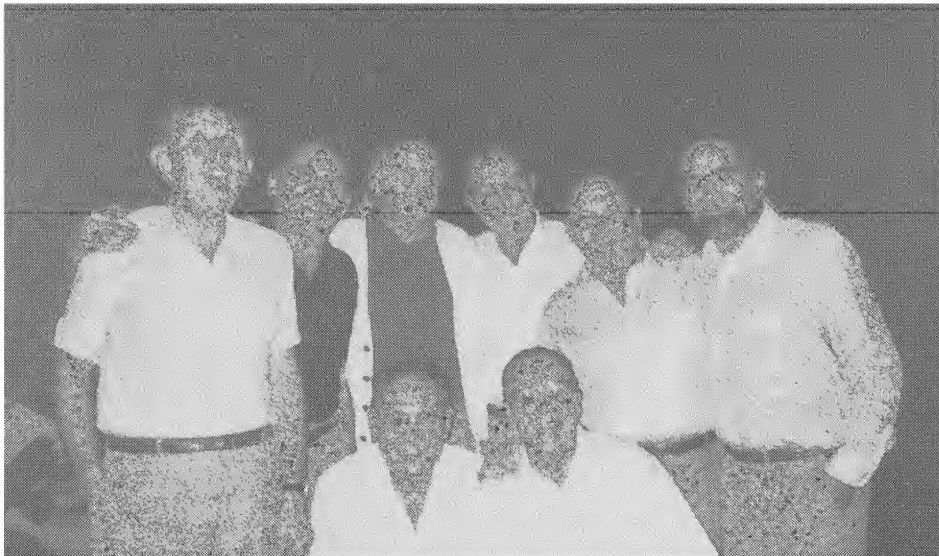


Stein Pisti, Salamon Tibi, Rotem Pali, Merlaub Cecilia, Harison Leslie, Leichtman Gabriel









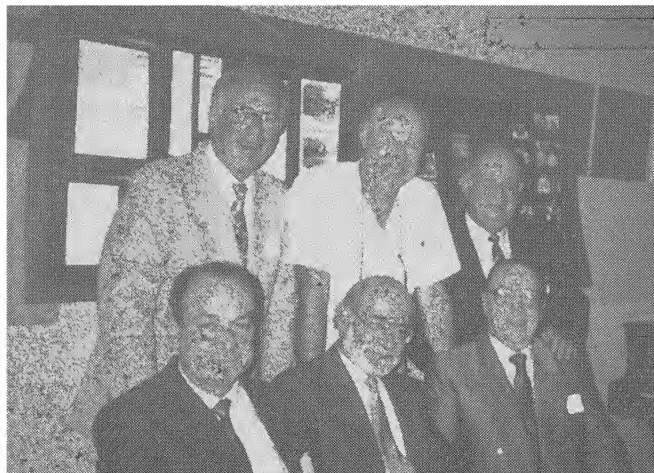
**The meeting in the year 1991**

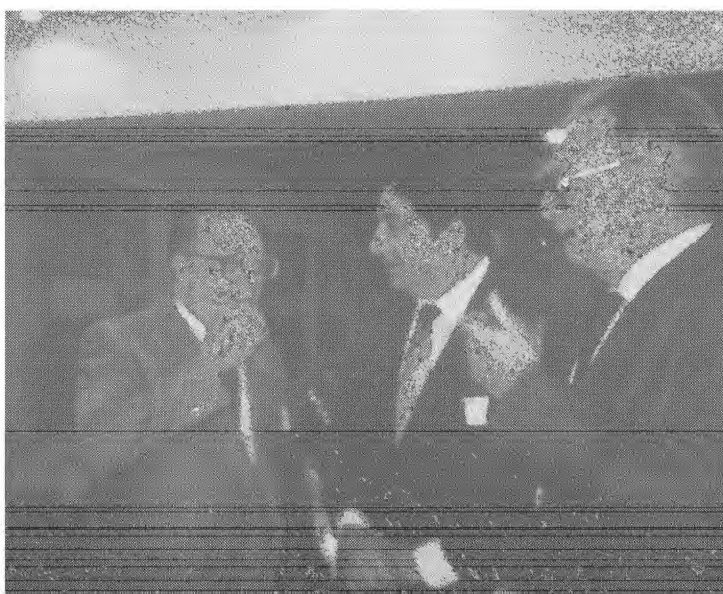


Professor Ivanir Balkányi Eva

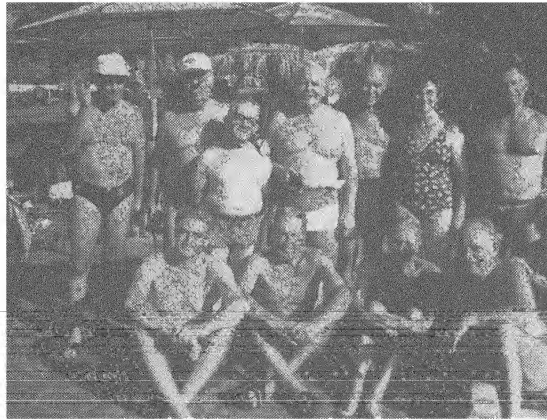


Dr. Josif Nicolae Schönfeld





**In the center: Dr. Radu Homescu, the Romanian Ambassador to Israel, himself originating from Arad; to the left Dr. Toma Gordon; to the right ing. Amos Solomon**



Cooking the lángos, on the shores of the lake Kinereth

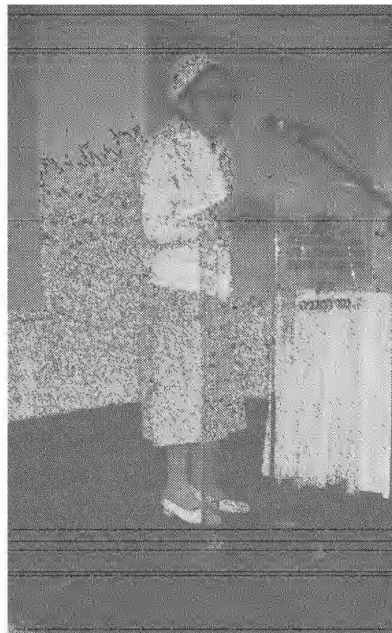
**The meeting in the year 1996**



**The trip to the Golan Heights**



Dr. Thomas Gordon



Professor Ivanir Balkányi Eva



The audience





The "lángos day" in Kibbutz Maagan on the shore of the lake "Kineret"

## Chapter 12

### The Economic and Cultural Life of the Jews in Arad After the Year 1918

#### a/. The Jews of Arad in the industry, trade and professional life, after the year 1918.

In the previous chapters dealing with the Jewish community in the 19-th century, we considered the expanding role of the Jews in the industrial, commercial and cultural life of Arad.

The period following the year 1918, shows a continual progress in the above domains.

Prof. Géza Kovách of Arad researched the statistical data (including that of the Hevra Kadisha too) of the fourth decade concerning the Jewish involvement in the industries of Arad. Here are some of the facts:

#### A. Larger enterprises (with more than 5 employees):

Specialty	Total number of plants	Out of these owned by Jews	Jewish percentage of the total
Textiles and tricotage	13	7	53%
Chemicals	12	4	33%
Construct. Materials	4	3	75%
Furniture	13	3	23%
Machinery	7	2	28%
Printing	16	7	44%
Mills	7	3	42%
Musical instruments	3	2	66%
Ice making	4	3	75%
Vinegar	3	3	100%

The only sugar factory was founded by Jewish people.

#### B. Smaller enterprises (artisanal):

Machinery repairs	28	11	40%
Dental laboratory	19	9	47%
Watch repairs	22	11	50%
Jewelry	24	12	50%
Millinery	38	18	47%

The artisanal workshops for rubber products, paints, glass-panes, basket weaving, soap, etc. were owned by Jews in approximately 40% of the cases.

Generally speaking, the enterprises with a more extensive technical investment had a larger Jewish involvement.

The increased contribution of the Jews in the industrial activity in Arad became more evident after the year 1918. Similar growth affected one of the oldest industrial enterprises of Arad - the steam mill of the Neumann brothers (started in 1856). The assets of the company, combined with the related business of making alcohol and yeast (the factory started in 1851 ) was over 7.2 million crowns already in 1917. This large firm was owned by the brethren Eduard and Carol Neumann, with the participation of other Jewish industrialists: Iuliu Walder, Ignatie Fuchs, Emeric Ritter and Géza Nemes.

The **(ITA), Textile Plant of Arad** (established in 1909) - wherein the Neumann brethren again had a dominant interest - attained full development after the year 1918. Statistical data show that in the year 1937, the aggregate assets amounted to 647.8 million lei, with over 3600 employees. Managers and top executives were: Josif Schwartz, A. Herzog, A. Kleinhändler, Alex. Liebermann, Ehrenwald, Oszkár Dán, etc.

The tricotage factory (formerly **FITA**, later called the **Tricoul Roșu**) was managed by Miksa Stern; already in the year 1938 it did produce goods valued at 30 million lei.

Another textile factory was the **TEBA**, managed by Mr. Ardeleanu.

There was a Jewish tradition in the woodworking and furniture industry in Arad. The Czettel plant did produce in 1937 over 10 thousand cubic meters of lumber and over 700 thousand meters of furniture veneer.

The machine industry had Jewish involvement already before the war, like the **Marta** (automotive engines) and the factory of ferrous materials (**Aradi Vasipari Rt.**). These endeavors were continued by the founding of the **Grundmann** enterprises in 1924. The plant employing over 200 employees, was managed amongst others by Iosif Friedmann, Béla Fülöp, Iosif Müller and Rolf Zoepffert. Another likewise company was the **IMASA**, involved in automotive engines, which in the year 1938 had assets in value of over 4 million lei. Executives of that company were Iosif Ablonczy and Emeric Steigerwald.

The year 1925 saw Jewish people launching two chemical plants:

**Azurol**, with an initial working capital of 8.1 million lei, managed by Béla Kepper.

**Polichrom**, with an initial working capital of 6 million lei, under the management of Dr. Cornel Keleti; this plant grew considerably in the fourth decade.

Another chemical plant was **Standard**, owned by Ștefan Singer.

**Mercur** was launched at the start of the first World War, with the aim of processing agricultural products. It was managed by the following Jewish businessmen: Mor Berger, Dezideriu Gottlieb, Pavel Erdős and Albert Szabó (the later became the owner of the largest emporiums of glass and china).

The local plant of the major liquor company from Budapest, **Zwack**, was launched in the year 1922, with an initial outlay of 3.5 million lei (managed by Ionel Friedland); additionally there was the **Flora** liquor company (managed by Miklos Reusz).

Ernö Kornis was the proprietor of the **Vulcan** brick factory.

Ladislau Lipkovits was the owner of a button factory.

Géza Szerdahelyi had a cork factory.

Ladislau Bizam was the proprietor of a soap factory.

The large printing plant (**Tipografia Aradana**) was managed by Jewish people too: Iosif Stauber, Andor Stauber, Heinrich Salgo.

Within the rural communities of the Arad County, various enterprises were founded by Jewish people. A quarry established prior to 1918 in Ghioroc, was managed by Iuliu Czettel, Leo Hirschler, Miksa Flamm and David Taussig. Documents from the year 1942, dealing with the confiscation of Jewish property, confirm that in the communities around Arad, Jews had owned 10 mills, 3 lumber mills, one distillery of alcohol, 3 oil presses, one cloth weavery and one gravel pit.

Amongst the many smaller artisanal industries founded and operated by Jews after 1918 we do mention the following: the machinery plant Festmann, Pfoma (knives), Ludovic Asrael, the brothers Fleischer (industrial furniture), the tricotage plants of Jenö Reismann, Peter and Leopold Stern, the silk weaving factory of Wilhelm Schwartz.

In modern times, the industrial enterprises were firmly connected to the banks, emerging as institutions of financial capital. In Arad already before the war, there existed a tradition of Jewish involvement in the finances, evidenced by the founding of two banks in 1904 and 1911: **The Commercial Bank of Arad**, and **The Cooperative of Economy and Commercial Credit of Arad**. The following Jewish individuals were involved in the management of these institutions: Rudolf Faragó, Heinrich Brandeisz, Salamon Földes, Lajos

Kneffel, Miksa Halpern, Mor Löwy, Dr.Eugen Sugár, Matei Angele, Ioan Gantner, Adam Mahler, Dr. Aladár Holló, Henrik Sági and Alajos Voczteck.

This banking tradition was continued after the year 1918, with two large financial institutions that figured even on the books of the Compans company of the Vienna Stock Exchange:

- **Arader Allgemeine Sparkasse** (the General Savings Bank of Arad), managed by the Jewish bankers Rudolf Faragó and Aladár Lakatos (the later became in 1936 the president of the occidental rites Community), and

**Arader Comitatsparkassa** (the Savings Bank of Arad County), being managed by Eugen Tauszk and Iosif Jellinek.

Besides these two prime institutions, we have to mention the **Merkur Bank**, where the principals were the Jewish families Gárdos and Goldschmidt. Other Jewish individuals who held positions of responsibility in certain banks were: Moskovics (First Transylvanian Bank), Stein (Italian Bank), and Ionel Friedland (Romanian Banking Society - affiliated to the German Dresdener bank).

The above cited Prof. Géza Kovách, did evince data, which confirmed the exceedingly large role played by the Jewish population of Arad in the thriving commercial life. Here are some of the important statistics:

**The involvement of the Arader Jews in the commerce (wholesale and retail) at the beginning of the fourth decade:**

Branch of trade	Total number of companies:	Out of these owned by Jews:	Percentage of the total owned by Jews:
Textiles (wholesale and retail)	106	73	69%
Tricotage (and hosiery)	15	11	73%
Underclothing	16	10	52%
Clothing	23	11	47%
Footwear	15	8	53%
House wares	13	6	45%
Glass & china	8	4	50%
Technical material	8	6	75%
Optical	6	5	83%
Books & paper ware	21	10	47%
Paints	9	6	66%
Foodstuff (wholesale and retail)	36	24	66%
Confectionery	26	13	50%
Restaurants	8	4	50%
Agricultural produce	14	14	100%
Livestock	20	9	45%
Leather wares	13	7	54%
Ropes & sacks	4	3	75%
Commercial agents	50	31	62%
Transport.agencies	20	14	70%
Lumberyards	19	9	47%

After 1918 a number of important commercial enterprises were created and managed by Jews. Here are some of them:

- Textiles: Gross and Róna, Szenes and Schwartz, Mór Berger, etc.
- Leather wares and shoes: Antal Purjesz, Francisc Mendelovits, etc.
- Glass and china: Albert Szabó, Mór Fischer, etc.
- Food and groceries: Herstein and Weisskopf, Luttwák and Abramovics, Emanuel Gross, Éles, Hofmann, etc.
- Grain and flour: S. Bornstein, Naum Grosz, Iacob Klein.
- Paints: Iosif Glück, N. Steinitzer, etc.
- Pharmacies: Káin, Rényi, Reiner, Földes, Kesztenbaum, Arnold Weisz.
- Books and paper wares: Izsó Kerpel, Sándor, Oláh, etc.

As far back as the 19-th century, there was a significant growth of the so-called free professions - an essential requirement in the progress of financial and cultural life.

Statistics from the year 1939, reveal that the Jewish Community was well represented percentage wise in those professions. At that time there were 41 Jewish physicians, comprising 40% of the total number. Many physicians were well known even beyond the confines of Arad, due to their high standard of scientific education and professional skill in the practice. It is not possible to presently name all of them, and as such we will mention only the better known representants of the profession. Some of the pediatricians were: Dr. Jeremiás, Dr. Alexandru Dohány, Dr. Ladislau Háber, Dr. Sidonia Steiner Krausz, Dr. Leopold Goldschmidt; the obstetricians: Dr. Ilona Fischer, Dr. B. Windholz, Dr. Joan Radó, Dr. Josif Háber, Dr. Oszkár Gárdos, the internists Dr. Henrik Aczél, Dr. Ernest Thau, Dr. Paul Téthi, Dr. Juliu Wolfner, Dr. Izsó Salamon, Dr. Paul Weisz, Dr. Carol Kun, Dr. Zoltán David; the E.N.T. men Dr. Róna, Dr. Waldmann; the ophthalmologist Dr. Carol Kállai; the urologist Dr. Iosif Ujhelyi; the surgeons Dr. Adalbert Reich, Dr. Mátrai, Dr. Goldberger; the dermatologist Dr. Ernest Simon; the radiologist Dr. Eugen Steiner, and many, many others.

There was a total number of 141 lawyers in Arad in the year 1939; out of these 46 were members of the Jewish Community. Most well known were: Alexandru Farkas, Alexandru Gerő, Iosif Kell, Henrik Schütz, Eugen Sugár, and many others.

The percentage of the Jewish engineers was only 20% of the total.

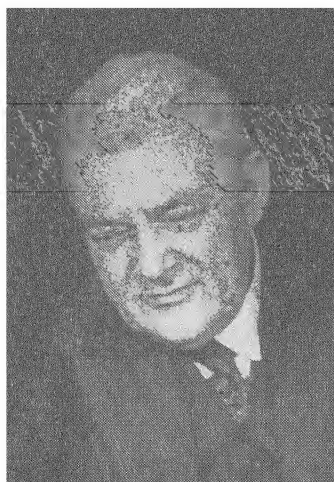
The percentage of Jewish architects was high, they had an important role in the development and modernization of the city. Out of the 17 architects in Arad, 7 were Jewish, a tally of over 40%.

A separate section has to be devoted to those Jewish intellectuals who excelled in the domains of the literature, the arts and the media.

**b. The Jewish community and their contribution to the development of the cultural life in Arad, after the year 1918.**

The intellectual life of the Jewish commune in Arad had its ups and downs. The periods of progress and decline were closely related to the emancipatory tendencies, which resulted in the Jews obtaining civic liberties within the city. At the beginning, in the times of the rabbis Aaron Chorin and Jakob Steinhardt, the Jewish literary creativity had - almost exclusively - a religious, talmudic-philosophical character. Later the intellectual activity became more diversified, encompassing all the fields. The cultural activity in the Hungarian language within Arad, is strongly indebted to the Jewish people. This was due mostly to the literati (novelists, publicists, critics), to the theater and musical authors, as well as to the artists (painters, sculptors).

The two most famous penmen were not born in Arad, but they lived most of their lifetime there, and a significant part of their literary work was generated in Arad.



**György Szántó** (1894-1961), was a painter, illustrator, writer and publicist; he was born in Lugoj but settled in 1924 in Arad, and lived there for 23 years. His artistic activity preceded his literary carrier, and was oriented towards the expressionism, a current that was most genuinely represented by the Hungarian painter Károly Kernstock. The most significant exponent of this school was Lajos Kassák (deceased in 1961, the same year as Szántó), who too was active in the literature as well. In the years 1925-27 Szántó published a short-lived review, the "Periszkop", illustrated with the works of the most modern artists:

Cezanne, Picasso, Modigliani, H.Rousseau, Brâncuși, Archipenko, the Dessau school and the Weimar school of Walter Gropius (called the "Bauhaus"). The best known paintings of Szántó are "Salome" and "Comedia della Arte".

His literary work comprises 37 volumes, out of which 20 were written in Arad. The most important ones are: “Messiások”, “Bábel tornya” (The Tower of Babel), “Stradivari”, “Meléte”, and the autobiographical writings: “Sebestyén” (a novel), “Fekete éveim” (My black years), “Elillant évek”, (The years that slipped away). The later deal with the feelings and sensations in the period when he had completely lost his eyesight. Towards the end of his life (1959) he was awarded in Budapest the grand literary prize “József Attila”.

**Ádám Raffi** (Dr. Miksa Kupfer) was born in 1898 in Năsăud. He did settle in Arad in the same year as Szántó, and was active as gynecologist. He wrote in Arad his most important novels “A máglya” (The bonfire, in 1936), “A léleklátó” (The seer of the soul, in 1937), “Herodes” (in 1939). The son of Ádám Raffi, Pál Réz (born in Arad in 1930), left Arad together with his parents in 1938 for Oradea, and later for Budapest. He is considered to be one of the significant publicists and literary translators of Hungary.

**Sándor Károly** (1894-1964) is also an Arader by birth. He became known through his novels and theater plays. In the year 1937, he took a stand against the Stalinist trials in the U.R.S.S. and this hurt him after 1944. It was only in 1960 that he could restart his writing and publicist career.

**Géza Cifra** was born in 1900 in Arad. He was a skilled newspaperman and publicist, a masterful writer of reminiscences, an important movie-writer, and a - far less successful - playwright and director. This cosmopolitan man, who was active in Berlin, Vienna and Paris, collaborated with Béla Balázs (pioneer of the movies). He did stimulate the careers of many great actors in the first half of the century. It is a pleasure to read his reminiscences: we do encounter there personalities like Greta Garbo, Marika Rökk, Emil Jannings, Max Reinhardt, Joseph Roth, and many others.

**Victor Aradi** (it was the alias of Victor Erdélyi), born in Pâncota, Arad County, in the year 1883, passed away in 1937. He was one of the writers who used his literary gifts to help promote the ideas of democracy and harmony amongst nations. In Budapest he joined the group around Oszkár Jászi, and championed the rights of Romanian nationals in Transylvania and the Banat. One of his literary works is the novel “Caterina, doamna noastră” (Our lady, Catherine) written in the Romanian language, the subject being Ecaterina Varga.

Amongst the more recent Jewish literati in Arad, we do mention **Gheorghe Schwartz**, who wrote novels and tales in the Romanian language. **Stefan Korda** (1911-1984) was known for his works aimed at young readers: “A Nagy Út” (the long road) was about the Seckler ethnographic researcher Sándor Körösi Csoma. **Gheorghe Erdős** (1901-1979) who was related to the writer Renée Erdős, was known for his gifted translations from German and

Romanian into Hungarian language. The same was true of **Tivadar Fekete** (1894-1940), **Alice Rosen (Rózsa)** and **Ada Monostori** (1909-1985), a poet and publicist in Romania as well as in Israel. **Iosif Károly** (1896-1960) is noteworthy for the quality, not the amount of his literary work. Furthermore we do mention: **Alexandru Lasner (Loránt)** (1897-1937), **Josif Steinfeld (Szerényi)** (1905-1956), **Serena Grün** and **Pavel Csermői (Weisz)**.

Amongst the better known publicists we do mention: **Josif, Joan** and **Stefan Stauber**, who owned the newspaper "Aradi Közlöny". **Carol Balla**, who for a number of years after 1944, was the editor in charge of the daily paper "Jövő", **Joan Aszodi** and **Ladislau Földes**. **Géza Pilisi** a member of the International PEN-club of newspapermen, was associated with the "Aradi Közlöny". **Gheorghe Bérczy** started his career at the "Aradi Közlöny" and for a long time was in charge of the popular sports-newspaper of Arad, "Jövő Sport"; after immigrating to Israel he did continue his journalistic activity at the newspaper "Uj Kelet" in Tel-Aviv. **Eugen Multas**; **Nicolae Zeiner (Zsigmond)**; **Anton Lisz**; **Oszkár Szomory** (he was deported to Transnistria in the years 1942-1944); **Pavel Salgó**; **Francisc Solymos**; **Carol Noti**; **Alexandru Messer**, **Gheorghe Rezes**. **Tiberiu Molnár** and **Ludovic Pintér** did start their journalistic career in Arad, and continued it in București.

**Mordechai Rössel**, one of the significant personalities of the religious Zionist movement in Arad (Bnei Akiva, Tora Umlacha), was born in Arad into a poor Jewish family. Even as a young man he was an active publicist in the Jewish media of Arad, Timișoara and Oradea. Reaching Israel in 1950, he became one of the founding members of the Kibbutz Nir Etzion.



He was endowed with a warm and attractive style. We mention his book: "Tik Mefkure" (the Mefkure File), describing the tragedy of the Jews sailing on the boat Mefkure (it was sunk somewhere on the Black Sea). Another volume of his "Társasutazás az Időben" (Group-travel in Time) was co-authored with the publicist Ladislau Tabak. One of his literary translations was the stirring diary of Auschwitz doctor Miklos Nyiszli: "Mengele bonczoló orvosa voltam" (I was the pathologist of Mengele). He was active contributing to the newspapers "Hatzofe" (In Hebrew - the Observer), and the Hungarian language "Uj Kelet", until his premature demise in 1986. His articles, as well as his talks were unanimously appreciated.

A number of Arader Jews did play a significant role in the artistic life of the city. Jacob Hirschl, in 1817, built the first theater in Arad. The approval from the emperor Franz Joseph was obtained in person by Moses Hirschl. This became later the setting of the Urania Movie Theater. Most important was the contribution of some Jews to the Lyric and Musical Theater Thalia, built in 1874, which in the third and fourth decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century became a leading artistic institution of Arad. Prominent Jewish actors performing in the Hungarian language were **Mihály Strasnov (Szendrei)** and even more so his son **Mihály Szendrei Junior**. The later was the artistic director of the theater in the period of its most momentous blossoming. The following actors distinguished themselves through their high level of theatrical performances: **Juliu Gál, Alexandru Farago, Erwin Felhö and Desideriu Kun**.

**Ludovic Shuk** was for a prolonged period the conductor of the theater orchestra of Arad - additionally he charmed the local music-lovers with his cello-playing. Another conductor was **Matei Csányi**.

This would be the place to mention **Ottó Rappaport**, born in 1921 in Arad. He was for a time stage-manager of the local theater, and later became director of the Hungarian Theater in Cluj. After his arrival to Israel, he worked in the redaction of the Hungarian language newspaper “Uj Kelet”, until his demise in November of 1993. **Savel Grunea** was also a stage-manager of the theater.

The Jews of Arad played an important role in the musical life of the city too.

A roster of the founders of the musical Conservatory was published in Arad, on May 1, 1833. Numerous Jews, mostly merchants, did figure amongst the donors: Herman Winkler, Albert Löwy, Lazar Hirschl, Janó May, Jacob Steinitzer, Henrik Chorin and others. 45 pupils were registered in 1834, amongst them 2 Jews: Samu Robicsek and Rudolf Leopold.

**Adolf Grünzweig** (born 1820), was a composer, mostly of ecclesiastical music.

In the year 1890 the “**Filarmonia**” society was founded, and its first president was Dr. Wilhelm Mandl. The following Jewish musicians did volunteer their services: Samu Robicsek, Dr. Alexandru Vas, Josif Schateles, Dr. Emil Grossman, Rezső Kell, Dr. Josif Kell, Magda Weil, Manó Szántó. In the year 1913, there was a festive performance on the occasion of the inauguration of the Cultural Palace. The following players were in the orchestra: Dr. Emil Grossman, Dr. Josif Kell, Desideriu Kell, Dr. Oszkar Gárdos, Ernő Ungár, Josif Schateles, Dr. Alexandru Vas, Samu Robicsek. Others who performed for many years in the orchestra were: Clara Schwartz,

Dr. Biksz, Dr. Engelberg, Arnold Weisz, Dr. Adalbert Goldzieher - he was one of the founders of the Philharmonia in Arad, and later the conductor.

In the year 1958, there was a Popular School of Arts. Amongst the teachers were: Elza Bán (piano), Márta Adorján, Rudolf Bloch (violin), Erzsi Fenyő (piano), Alexandru Freiman (cello), Piroska Gross (violin), Olga Zicher (guitar), Margit Heimovits (piano), Veronica Bloch (piano), Maria Berend (violin), Tiberiu Epstein (violin), Marika Kardos (piano), Marta Steinfeld (piano). Magda Stern was employed as a coach.

There were a number of notable solo instrumentalists. Violinists worth mentioning are: **Dr. Alexandru Weisz**, **Carol Berger**. **Magda Weil** was for years well known for her exalted artistic interpretations. Deceased prematurely (1942) she was noted for espousing young talents. The interpretation she provided on the benefit performance for the victims of the major flood in the winter of 1932-1933, was a memorable occasion for the Arader public. **Tiberiu Klausner** (born 1928), did graduate later from a prestigious music school in New York and became a well-known soloist performing on numerous occasions. The violinist **Maria Berend** was remarkable by the glowing tonality of her performances, especially the religiously inspired "Kol Nidre" of Bruch. Amongst the piano players we do cite **Robi Weisz**, who presently lives in Quebec, Canada, active as a teacher at the local Music School; he presented numerous recitals in various cities in Canada and Europe. **Leslie (Laci) Szegő** lives and performs in Los Angeles. Furthermore are **Clara Herzfeld** (the spouse of Dr. Alexandru Weisz), **Marika Kardos** (living presently in the USA, for many years a prolific musical performer), and **Marta Lazoc Steinfeld** who resides in Israel - in the year 1990 she was awarded the gold diploma of the Budapest Musical School. **Ignác Goldzieher**, was highly regarded by everybody; in the years 1941-1945, he taught music at the Jewish Lyceum, and after the war he became the principal of the Music School. The pianist **Toma Schwartz**, originally from Arad, lives presently in the USA; he was one of the talented young men who did show his future promise while still in his native locality.

The pianist **Elisabeta Molnár Fenyő** functioned in the management of another music school.

**Éva (Klein) Armon** began her musical education in the High Music School of Cluj. Since 1960 she is a well known piano teacher in the Ted Arison Conservatorium in Tel-Aviv. She is playing piano also in chamber orchestras and was twice soloist with the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra.

**Vera (Eckstein) Székely** learned piano in the Music School of București and she is teaching piano in Timișoara (Romania).

**Iván Jakabovics** learned violin in the same Music School of București and played violin in the Philharmonic Orchestra of București. Now he lives in Wiesbaden-Germany.

**Gábor Simon** (born in Arad in the year 1937), is an important cultural leader, a well-known music critic, teaching music and being a member of the Beer-Sheva Philharmonic society. He authored many poignant remembrances of the Jewish past in Arad, and he is the chronicler of the Jewish Lyceum alumni meetings. Between instrumentists we mention also **Mirel Reznic** (violin), **Reményi (Pubi) Dov** (piano) and **Max Iván** (piano).

The following were well-known vocalists:

Miss **Béby Hegedüs** (the future Mrs. Rosenfeld), was highly gifted, attracting attention from the very start of the third decade. Within a short time span, the fame of the soprano Béby Hegedüs expanded well beyond the confines of our city. For years in a row, she did perform in Arad, Oradea, Timișoara and Satu-Mare. She had a wide repertory, from lieder to arias of operas and operettas, and her voice was heard on the programs of the radio stations of București, Budapest and Belgrad. The 100-th anniversary of the neologue synagogue was festively celebrated with an overflowing crowd present in the temple; on that occasion Béby Hegedüs sang the psalm “Hashivenu”, enchanting the listeners with her beautiful voice.

**Dezideriu Róna**, was one of the significant singers of Arad, with a winsome baritone voice, heard at Community as well as at theatrical events. **Lissi Grünfeld** (Edené), a talented singer, had a wide repertory of operas and operettas and was well known in the fourth decade (she was tenured at the theater of Arad and Satu-Mare). **Joan Bing** performed both as a singer and as an actor, having played roles in numerous operas and operettas. Furthermore we have to mention the singer and music teacher **Maria Salamon**, the singer **Ecaterina Szerényi**, and the baritones **Andor Schönberger**. In the years after the Second World War, **Rudolf Feleki** was retained as a “hazan” (cantor) by the occidental rites Community, following the tragic death of his predecessor Alexandru Weisz. Feleki possessed a rich baritone and a wide musical erudition, he was appreciated not only for the hazanut, but he is well remembered and prized for his performance of opera arias and popular songs on the occasion of his recitals. **Rahel (Kati) Székely Faltin** was born in Arad; her marvelous soprano voice was heard within numerous concert halls in Europe as well as in Israel. In the seventh decade she was a soloist of the Israeli Opera, under the direction of Edis de Philippe. Presently she is the principal of the Music School in Geneva, where she teaches canto. She is also the conductor of a women chamber choir.

**Dov Tabori (Teuerholz)** did excel in hazanut, both in Israel and abroad.

In the field of the arts we have to mention a number of people whose gifts attracted widespread attention. The painters are: **Izidor Kaufmann**, **Frigyes Balla**, **Ilonka Littecky Krausz**. A painter born in Arad and presently active in Paris is **Marta Indig (Leopold)**, whose work did receive prizes at numerous international exhibitions. **Irma Kronstein** was a well-known sculptress. She did study in Vienna, and contemporary critics did hail her talent.

**Emil Vitroel** is a well-known sculpture living in Arad.

**Francisc Hegedüs**, the brother of the singer Béby Hegedüs, became a respected movie director in the fourth decade, first in Hungary, and later in Austria.

**Ili Sebes**, was the principal of a choreographic studio besides teaching there. Her activity did foster the artistic development of many young gymnasts and dancers.

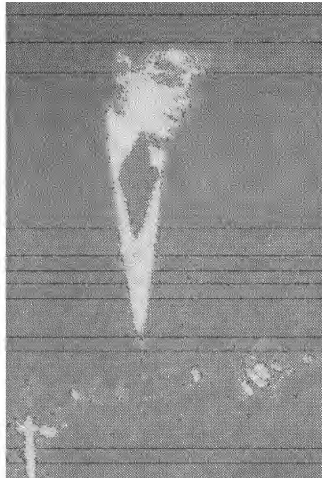
This is the place to mention **Toma Garai**, who became an international grand master of chess, and is a creator of chess riddles.

**David Grünwald** and **Stefan Löwinger** were ranked tennis athletes, playing at the Hellas club and the UTA Sports club. They both attended the national championship. In wrestling, **Ludwig Grossmann**, the son of Hermann Grossmann, also member of the UTA Sports club, was a few years national champion.

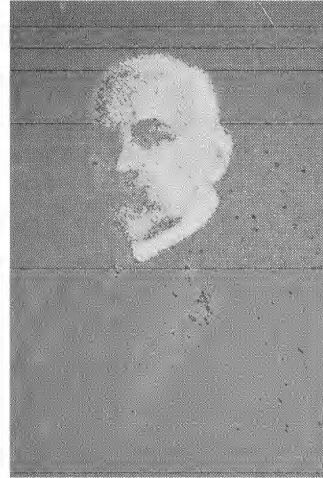
We do appeal to the readers lenient disposition, for the regrettable and unavoidable omission of names (and personalities) that may have occurred while editing the present material.



**Magda Weil**



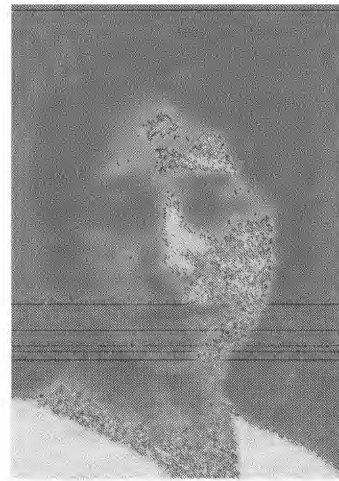
**Berger Károly**



**Kaufmann Isidor**



**Balla Frigyes**



**Kronstein Irma**



## Index of Notes and References

\*1. The main bibliographic source was the work of the well-known prior of the Minorite Order of Arad, the liberal catholic priest Otto Lakatos: "Arad története" (The history of Arad), Vol. 1. Ed. Gyulai, Arad, 1881. The book is based among others on the documents existing in the archives of the Minorite Order in Arad.

\*2. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p. 31, quoting an article in the publication "Magyar Sion", 1866, p.821.

\*3. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p.31, quoting Latin language documents, published by the historian L.Fabian in "Aradvármegye leírása" (The description of Arad County), p. 201-263.

\*4. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p. 39, quoting from the above mentioned work of L. Fabian p.8-10, and 130-131; there are references to the historian László Thuroczy and to the famed Catholic theologian, archbishop of Esztergom, Péter Pázmány.

\*5. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p.43, derived from the "Magyar Enciklopédia" (Encyclopaedia Hungarica) Vol. III, p. 658-659.

\*6. Most of the material is drawn from the 3-d section of a series of articles by the architect Emil Anghel, "Succesiunea târgurilor ca element structural definitoriu al oraşului Arad" (The sequence of the markets - fairs, as a defining structural element in the city of Arad), published in the newspaper Adevărul in Arad, on Nov. 22, 1994.

\*7. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger - the former chief rabbi of the Cluj Community, living presently in the USA, - "Istoria evreilor din Transylvania 1632-1944" (the history of the Jews in Transylvania, 1632-1944) ed. Enciclopedica, Bucureşti, 1994, p. 74.

\*8. Ferenc Fejtő, "Budapesttől - Párizsig" translated from French (From Budapest to Paris) ed. Magvető, Budapest, 1990, p. 33.

\*9. Leo Schlezak, "Lachen mit Schlezak" (Laughter with Schlezak) ed. RoRoRo. 1991, p.139.

\*10. Sándor Márki, "Arad vármegye és Arad szabadkirályi város története" (The history of Arad County and of the Free Royal City of Arad), Vol. I, Arad, 1892, p. 428.

\*11. Annale Minorum gen. Trionum Ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum. Ed. L. Wadding, ed. III. tom. 13. Quarachi 1932 p. 302, 267. in Johannes Hofer:

“Biblioteca franciscană” (The Franciscan Library), Vol. II. Rome, 1965, p. 356-361.

\*12. Moshe Carmilly-Weinberger, *ibidem*, p. 22.

\*13. S. Dubnov, “Weltgeschichte des Jüdischen Volkes” (The world history of the Jewish people), Vol. VII, p. 276-284.

\*14. S. Dubnov. *ibidem*, p. 275-276.

\*15. M.H.J. (Monumenta Hungariae Judaica), Vol.XVI, p. 26-28.

\*16. Leopold Rosenberg, “Jahrbuch für die Israelitischen Kulturgemeinden in Ungarn, 5621 (1860-1861)” (Almanach for the Jewish Communities in Hungary, 5621 - 1860-1861).

\*17. Leopold Rosenberg, *ibidem*, p. 144-145.

\*18. Leopold Rosenberg, *ibidem*, p.146-147.

\*19. Leopold Rosenberg, *ibidem*, chapter 16.

\*20. S. Dubnov, *ibidem*, p. 284-292.

\*21. S. Dubnov, *ibidem*, p.284-292.

\*22. M.H.J. *ibidem*, Vol. XVII, p. 419-420.

\*23. Leopold Rosenberg, *ibidem*, p. 146.

\*24. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p. 167-168. (The chapter dealing with the Jewish Community of Arad, was authored by the chief rabbi Jacob Steinhardt).

\*25. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p. 265-266.

\*26. M.H.J. *ibidem*, Vol. XVII. p. 419-420.

\*27. Otto Lakatos, *ibidem*, p. 80.

\*28. Leopold Rosenberg, *ibidem*, p. 146.

\*29. “Arad - permanență în istoria patriei” (Continuity in the history of the homeland), Ed.Arad, 1978, p. 214-218.

\*30. “Versuch einer Darstellung der Österreichischen Monarchie in Statistischen Tafeln 1828” (A attempt to render the Austrian Monarchy in statistical tables, 1828) p. 89. Idem “Tafeln für das Jahr 1841”, (Tables for the year 1841) Wien 1844, idem 1851, Wien 1856, “Übersicht des Bevölkerungsstandes des Kronlandes Ungarn 1850” (An overview of the demographics of the crownland Hungary in 1850), as well as Ágnes Lukács: “Magyarország népessége törvényhatóságok szerint a 1820-as években” (The population of Hungary in the 1820-s, according to legal authorities);

furthermore Elek Fényes: “Magyarország statisztikája” (The statistical data of Hungary) Vol. I. Pest 1842, p. 47-48; furthermore Gustav Thirring “Az 1804 - évi népösszeírás” (The census of the population in the year 1804) in the Magyar Statisztikai Szemle, Vol. I, 1936, p. 16-17; furthermore “Statistische übersichten über die Bevölkerung nach der Zahlung von 31 Oktober, 1857” (Statistical data concerning the population subsequent to the census of October 31, 1857), Wien 1859.

\*31. Demian: “Statistische Gemälde der Österreichischen Monarchie” (Statistical aspects of the Austrian Monarchy), Wien 1796, p. 423, and “Acta Congregationum” of the government archives, Arad chapter 998/1802, 847/1810, 925/1813, 698/1820/ 137/1842.

\*32. This task was the personal responsibility of the rabbi.

\*33. Acta Congregationum, 859/1806.

\*34. Ibidem, 634/1820.

\*35. Ibidem, section 49, #1-4/1831, section 41, #1-4/1832.

\*36. Ibidem, 641, 987/1821.

\*37. Ibidem, 242/1822.

\*38. Ibidem, 1053/1823.

\*39. Ibidem, 1254/1823.

\*40. Ibidem, 1053/1823.

41. Ibidem, 1500/1823.

\*42. Ibidem, 672/1831.

\*43. Péter Ágoston: “A zsidók útja” (The road of the Jews), p. 125-126.

\*44. István Lassú: “Az ausztriai birodalomnak statisztikai, geográfiai és historiai leírása” (The statistical, geographical and historical portrayal of the Austrian empire), Buda, 1829, p. 66.

\*45. Tivadar Ottemberg: “Az aradi első Takarékpénztár 60 éve” (The 60 years of the First Savings Bank of Arad), Arad, 1901, p. 1-26.

\*46. Acta Congregationum, 1687/1833.

\*47. The archives of the Hodos-Bodrog monastery, accounts, 1842.

\*48. Acta Congregationum, 1493,1494,1495/1827.

\*49. Ibidem, 1687/1833, 1509/1822 and 369/1824.

- \*50. The Archives of the Jewish Community, file 2: 57,189, 190. From G. Eperjessy: "Zsidó iparosok" (Jewish artisans) in the periodical Századok (1983) No.117, Vol. IV. p. 717.
- \*51. Government archives, Arad chapter, Arad section 438,459/1838.
- \*52. Henrik Pollák: "Adatok a magyar izraeliták statisztikájához, első magyar zsidó naptár és évkönyv az 1848-as szökőévre, első évfolyam" (Facts concerning the statistical data of the Hungarian Jews, the first Hungarian Jewish calendar for the leap-year 1848, the first volume), Pest 1848, p. 124-125, 128-131.
- \*53. Ibidem, chapter 50.
- \*54. Govt. archives, ibidem 362,577,925,926, 927/1838, 2/1847, idem 322/1838, 97/1847, idem 879,1239/1838, Jewish Community, file #1, - 12.
- \*55. Ibidem, 366,828/1838.
- \*56. Acta Congregationum 221/1832.
- \*57. Ármin Kecskeméti: "A Csanádmegyei zsidók története" (The history of the Jews in Csanád County) Makó, 1929, p. 14.
- \*58. Acta Congregationum 1392/1828, 53/1832, 352,1697/1833, 537/1838.
- \*59. Ibidem, 221/1815, 1265/1817, 298/1818, 965/1830.
- \*60. Ibidem, 855/1843.
- \*61. Pesti Hirlap # 357/ June 2, 1844, # 361/ June 16, 1844.
- \*62. M.H.J. Vol. XVI, p.26-28
- \*63. Otto Lakatos ibidem p.81.
- \*64. Leopold Rosenberg, ibidem, p. 146.
- \*65. M.H.J. Vol. XVII p. 419-420.
- \*66. Otto Lakatos, ibidem, p. 81.
- \*67. Otto Lakatos, ibidem, p. 82
- \*68. Govt. Archives, City Hall section 999/1838, Govt. Archives, County Offices section 237/1832, Archives of the Jewish Community, file 2, p. 47-49.
- \*69. The rabbi Chorin certifiably lived in the present communitarian building after 1834.
- \*70. J.Löw: "Aaron Chorin, Gesammelte Schriften" (Complete writings), II, p. 251-420, as well as others (Moses Richtmann, David Sofer, etc.).

- \*71. Acta Congregationum 422,437/1805.
- \*72. About the positive role of rabbi Aaron Chorin and the antagonism he was exposed see: S. Dubnov, *ibidem*, Vol. IX, p. 162, ed. Berlin 1929.
- \*73. Rafael Patai: "The Jews in Hungary". Wayne State University Press, Detroit, 1996, P. 241.
- \*74. Acta Congregationum. 718, 1124, 1125/1823.
- \*75. Acta Congregationum. 258, 637, 740, 741, 742, 1063/1827.
- \*76. Otto Lakatos, *Ibidem*, p.92.
- \*77. *Ibidem*, p. 89.
- \*78. Rafael Patai, *ibidem*, p.255.
- \*79. Archives of the Jewish Community, file 72, p. 115.
- \*80. *Ibidem*, file 2, p. 72-73, 207 p. 81-82. Magyar Rabbik year 3, # 1-2/1906 p. 8; year 5, # 3-4/1909, p. 169.
- \*81. Egyenlőség: year 4, # 24 (June 14, 1885) p. 7; #35 (Sept. 7, 1885) p.3.
- \*82. Sándor Rosenberg: "A zsidó és keresztény között polgárilag kötött házasságnak megáldása a zsinagógában" (Consecrating the civil marriage between a Jew and a Gentile in the synagogue) Arad, 1895.
- \*83. Rosenberg Sándor végtisztessége, kiadja az aradi zsidó hitközség. (The last homage to Sándor Rosenberg, put forth by the Jewish Community of Arad) Arad 1910.
- \*84. Uj Kelet # 283/Dec.16, 1934.
- \*85. The Jewish periodical of Timișoara (Uj Kor) published on May 29,1937, a report from Arad, entitled: "Rabinul Vágvölgyi ridică făclia sionistă" (The rabbi Vágvölgyi hoists the Zionist torch).
- \*86. Magyar Zsidó Lexikon p. 58; Egyenlőség # 41-42/Oct.12, 1913, p.11; *ibidem* #32/Aug.9, 1903, p.11.
- \*87. Archives of the Jewish Community, file 93, p .105, 111.
- \*88. *Ibidem*, file 92, p. 114-115; file 93, p. 114.
- \*89. *Ibidem*, file 92, p.91.
- \*90. Ignácz Deutsch: "Az aradi izraelita árvaház számadási kimutatása 1895/96" (The statement of accounts of the Israelite Orphanage of Arad for the year 1895/96); Egyenlőség #21/ May 24,1908, p. 10; #46/Nov.15, 1908, p. 9.

- \*91.** Miksa Grünbaum: "Az aradi izraelita hitközség iskoláinak története" (The chronicle of the schools of the Arad Israelite Community), Arad 1896, p. 4, 30, and so on.
- \*92.** "Almanahul Școlii Evreiesti din Arad" (The yearbook of the Jewish school of Arad) edited by the Jewish Community of Arad, 1932.
- \*93.** Ibidem.
- \*94.** Otto Lakatos, ibidem, p. 126.
- \*95.** The periodical "Der Ungar", from Pest, issues from the year 1848.
- \*96.** Elek Fényes: "A magyar birodalom nemzetiségei" (The nationalities inside the Hungariam realm), Pest 1867, p.36.
- \*97.** Josef Cohne: "Die Juden der Revolution" (The Jews of the revolution) Arad 1878; B.Bernstein: "Az 1848/49 magyar szabadságharc és a zsidók" (The fight for freedom in 1848/49 and the Jews), Budapest 1898, p. 101-102, 107; Archives of the Jewish Community file 1848.
- \*98.** The Szécsenyi National Library, Budapest, section manuscripts, file 794/1.
- \*99.** B.Bernstein, ibidem, p. 114; Otto Lakatos, ibidem, p. 126.
- \*100.** Ibidem, p. 156, 174-188.
- \*101.** Mult és Jövő ICP 302; B.Bernstein, ibidem, p.138-140.
- \*102.** The statistical data are gathered from a microfilm in the Statistical Archives of Budapest concerning the year 1851; for the period 1851-1920 from the evaluation of the census information effected by Dr. Gyula Somogyi: "Különlenyomat Arad megye és város monográfiája" (Special edition and monography of the county and city of Arad), Vol.III, 1913.
- \*103.** Data from the census of the years 1870, 1881 and 1891.
- \*104.** Ibidem.
- \*105.** Ibidem. Also the Bulletin of the Jewish Community of Arad, Vol.II, #2/ Febr. 1940, p. 79.
- \*106.** Magyar Statisztikai Közlemények (quoted again as M.S.K.) Vol.61, p.426-427.
- \*107.** Govt. Archives, chapter Arad, the files of the Imperial and Royal Comissar: 6328/1850, 7956/1851, 2077/1853, 2293/1865, 5458/1864, 8119/1863; furthermore Otto Lakatos, ibid. Vol. III, p. 226.
- \*108.** Egyenlőség, Vol.32, #52/Dec.8, 1913, p.9.
- \*109.** Ibidem, Vol. 18, #47/Nov.17, 1899, p. 12.

- \*110. "Az aradi kereskedelmi és iparkamara jelentése 1910 évre" (The report of the Arad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, for the year 1910) p.303; Magyar Zsidó Lexikon p.171; Otto Lakatos, *ibid.* Vol. III, p. 186.
- \*111. Ernő Gál: "Arad szabad Királyi város és Arad vármegye közgazdasági, közigazgatási és közművelődési állapotának leírása" (A representation of the economical, administrative and educational status of the free royal city of Arad and Arad county), p.126-127, 146, 177-181, 68-69. M.S.K. Vol. 56, p.441, 449, 465, 481, 488.
- \*112. Egyenlőség, Jun.12,1910, p.11, Sept. 17, 1905; Magyar Zsidó Lexikon p. 58.
- \*113. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol. 16, p.68-69.
- \*114. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol.64, p.317, Vol. 56, p. 682, 731-735; Egyenlőség Jan.8,1892, p.9.
- \*115. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol. 56, p. 737-741, Vol. 64, p. 317.
- \*116. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol. 64, 317, Vol. 56, p. 765, 771-773.
- \*117. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol.56, p. 767, 769.
- \*118. M.S.K. *ibid.* Vol. 64, p. 279, Vol. 56, p. 385.
- \*119. Magyar Izraelita, #9/Febr.28, 1861, p.3; #24/June 13, 1861, p. 3. Archives of the Jewish Community, file 9, p.134, 154, 155, 208.
- \*120. Zsidó Hiradó, #42/ Nov. 27, 1896, p. 9.
- \*121. Egyenlőség #.46/ Nov. 20, 1887, p.10; Govt. Archives Arad, chapter City Hall, Főispáni #.68/1919; Magyar Zsidó Lexikon p. 58.
- \*122. Magyar izraelita #7/ Febr. 14, 1868, p. 55.
- \*123. Izraelita Közlöny, #41/ Oct. 11, 1868, p. 380-382.
- \*124. Avraham Krausz: "A régi Erdély, Arad, I" (The old Transylvania, Arad I), 1993, Tel Aviv, p. 19.
- \*125. Uj Kelet, #70/ March 31, 1921.
- \*126. Uj Kelet, #60/ Sept. 20, 1920.
- \*127. Uj Kelet, #2/ Febr. 8, 1920.
- \*128. Uj Kelet, #108/ Dec. 23, 1920.
- \*129. Uj Kelet, #145/ Jul.7, 1921.
- \*130. Uj Kelet, # 83/ Apr. 17, 1926.

- \*131. Uj Kelet, #212/ Sept. 16, 1933.
- \*132. Uj Kor, # 19/ May 16, 1931.
- \*133. Uj Kelet, #287/ Dec. 28, 1929.
- \*134. According to Uj Kelet, #158/ Jul. 18, 1939.
- \*135. Statement of Ezra Lasner (Horesh).
- \*136. Data published in Uj Kelet, # 291/ Dec. 22, 1937.
- \*137. Uj Kor, #3/ Febr. 1, 1930.
- \*138. Uj Kor, #7/ Apr. 23, 1930.
- \*139. Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file #93, p.35-50.
- \*140. Uj Kelet, # 283, Dec. 16, 1934.
- \*141. Uj Kor, # 21/ Febr. 27, 1937.
- \*142. Statement of the Zionist activist David Dov.
- \*143. Ibidem.
- \*144. Uj Kor, #47/ Dec. 8, 1921.
- \*145. The booklet Arad I, edited by Stefan (Avram) Krausz, in Israel, 1993.
- \*146. Uj Kelet, #254/ Nov. 14, 1939.
- \*147. Account of the Arad County Office for the period Apr.1, 1941 - Apr. 1, 1942.
- \*148. Archives of the Arad County Office, file 194/40.
- \*149. From "Documents Concerning The Fate of the Romanian Jewry During The Holocaust", ed. Beate Klarsfeld Foundation, 1986, Vol. IV, doc. #237/ Jan. 30, 1943.
- \*150. Archives of The Jewish Community of Arad, file 101, p.89.
- \*151. Archives of the Arad County Office, file 185/43, p. 34.
- \*152. Ibidem, file 108. p. 2-13.
- \*153. Ibidem, file 241/42, p.2.
- \*154. As per the data of the 1941 census of the Jews.
- \*155. Account of the Arad County Office for the period Apr.1,1941 - Apr. 1, 1942.
- \*156. Archives of the Arad County Office, file 360/41-43, p. 21.

- \*157. The estimate of the German Consulate in Timisoara, quoted from "Documents Concerning The Fate Of The Romanian Jewry", *ibid.* p. 610.
- \*158. Archives of The Jewish Community of Arad, file 110, p.77.
- \*159. *Ibidem*, file 101 and 106.
- \*160. Quoted from the diary of the jurist Dr. Albert Fuchs.
- \*161. "Documents Concerning The Fate of The Romanian Jewry During The Holocaust" *ibid.* doc. #103/ Sept. 15, 1942.
- \*162. *Ibid.* doc. #96/ Sept. 15, 1942.
- \*163. *Ibid.* doc. #117/ Sept. 22, 1942.
- \*164. Dr. Al. Șafran (the former chief rabbi of Romania): "Resisting the Storm - Romania 1940-1947" ed. Jean Ancel, Jerusalem, Yad Vashem, 1987; furthermore: "Un tison arraché aux flammes, memoires" (An ember redeemed from the blaze, memoirs), Ed. Stock, Paris, 1989.
- \*165. "Documents Concerning The Fate Of The Romanian Jewry During The Holocaust" *ibid.* doc. #151/ Oct.11, 1942.
- \*166. The Decision of the Government Council of Oct.27, 1942, addressed to the General Directorate of the Romanian Railways; the document exists in the Museum of the Holocaust of the Romanian Jews in București,
- \*167. "Documents Concerning The Fate Of The Romanian Jewry During The Holocaust" *ibid.* doc.# 223/ Ian.13, 1943.
- \*168. Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file 101, p.264.
- \*169. Baruch Camin, "Hatzniha vhabriha im Jehudei Romania, betkufat Hashoa veahareia" (Parachuting and sheltering with the Romanian Jews - during the Holocaust and afterwards), ed. Tel-Aviv, 1986.
- \*170. Amos Etinger, "Tzniha iveret" (Blind jump), Ed. Tel-Aviv, 1986.
- \*171. Mordehai Rössel, "Tic Mefkure" (The Mefkure file), Ed. Tel-Aviv, 1981.
- \*172. See the pamphlet "Az aradi zsidó Lyceum alapításának 50-ik évfordulójára" (For the 50-th anniversary of the Jewish Lyceum of Arad), ed. Haifa 1991.
- \*173. "Magyarország Felszabadítása" (The Eliberation of Hungary), Ed. Zrinyi, Budapest, 1975, p. 70-84.
- \*174. The minutes of the police interrogation of Eichmann, at the Yad Vashem in Jerusalem p.3388-3389; furthermore Jochen von Lang "Das Eichmann Protokol" (The Eichman files) Ed. Severn & Schalter, Germany, 1982, p. 214-

217; furthermore file # 276/1961 of the war criminal Novac, from the Vienna Court, also at the Yad Vashem, Jerusalem.

**\*175.** Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file 109, p.7

**\*176.** Ibid. file 110, p.77

**\*177.** Minutes of the IHUD conference in Timisoara (May 30 - June 2 1946), at the Strohlitz Foundation, Haifa University, file T4/b1.

**\*178.** Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file 109, p. 76.

**\*179.** Ibid. file 118, p. 29.

**\*180.** WIZO commemorative album, Ed. Tel Aviv, 1969, p. 253.

**\*181.** Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file 110, p.33.

**\*182.** Ibid. file 118, p.29.

**\*183.** Statement of Judith Ben Ari (Leipnicker).

**\*184.** Statements of Béla (Mordehai) Mandel and Iosif Szegfü (Sinai).

**\*185.** Statement of Nusi (Sara) Weinberger.

**\*186.** Archives of the Jewish Community of Arad, file 117, p. 220.

**\*187.** Ibid. file 116, p. 35.

**\*188.** Dr. Moses Rosen, "Primejdii, încercări, miracole" (Dangers, Trials, Miracles) Ed. Hasefer, București, 1991, p.141.

**\*189.** Raoul Hilberg, "Perpetrators, Victims, Bystanders. The Jewish Catastrophe 1933-1945". (See chapter Victims). Haper, Collins. New York. 1992.

**The roster of Jewish physicians practicing in Arad (in the years 1920-1970)**

<b>Dr. Henrik Aczél</b>	<b>Dr. Péter Kállai</b>
<b>Dr. Irina Berger</b>	<b>Dr. Iosif Kallos</b>
<b>Dr. Mauritiu Biksz</b>	<b>Dr. Iván Kardos</b>
<b>Dr. Ernest Boros</b> (later converted to Roman Catholic faith)	<b>Dr. Jacob Keppich</b>
<b>Dr. Andrei Copil</b>	<b>Dr. Wilhelm Kerpel</b>
<b>Dr. Idel Creştinu</b>	<b>Dr. Albert Kilényi</b>
<b>Dr. Eugen Czuker</b>	<b>Dr. Nicolae Klein</b>
<b>Dr. Ármin Czukermann</b>	<b>Dr. Kleinmann</b>
<b>Dr. Sarlota Czukermann</b>	<b>Dr. Cornel Koralek</b>
<b>Dr. Zoltán Dávid</b>	<b>Dr. Juliu Koralek</b>
<b>Dr. Alexandru Dohány</b>	<b>Dr. Eduard Kugel</b>
<b>Dr. Adalbert Eckstein</b>	<b>Dr. Zoltán Kugel</b>
<b>Dr. Adalbert Epstein</b>	<b>Dr. Carol Kun</b>
<b>Dr. Achile Fălticeneanu</b>	<b>Dr. Miksa Kupfer</b>
<b>Dr. Elena Fischer</b>	<b>Dr. Carol Kurzer</b>
<b>Dr. Desideriu Fridmann</b>	<b>Dr. Alexandru Loránt</b>
<b>Dr. Ladislau Gábor</b>	<b>Dr. Miksa Löwinger</b>
<b>Dr. Oscar Gárdos</b>	<b>Dr. Isaia Löwy</b>
<b>Dr. Wilhelm Glasser</b>	<b>Dr. Suzana Löwy</b>
<b>Dr. Emanuel Goldberger</b>	<b>Dr. Eduard Lutwák</b>
<b>Dr. Leopold Goldschmidt</b>	<b>Dr. Emanuel Lutwák</b>
<b>Dr. Martin Grünwald</b>	<b>Dr. Ladislau Mátrai</b>
<b>Dr. Iosif Háber</b>	<b>Dr. Piroska Mátrai</b>
<b>Dr. Ladislau Háber</b>	<b>Dr. Ernest Messinger</b>
<b>Dr. Arthur Hacsek</b>	<b>Dr. Ştefan Molnár</b>
<b>Dr. Clara Halász</b>	<b>Dr. Mihai Nagy</b>
<b>Dr. Francisc Halász</b>	<b>Dr. Ioan Naschitz</b>
<b>Dr. Halmos</b>	<b>Dr. Zoltán Pécsi</b>
<b>Dr. Ana Harnic</b>	<b>Dr. Pollák</b>
<b>Dr. Andrei Hersch</b>	<b>Dr. Rada</b>
<b>Dr. Alexandru Hirsch</b>	<b>Dr. Ioan Radó</b>
<b>Dr. Ioan Hirsch</b>	<b>Dr. Ana Rareş</b>
<b>Dr. Gavriel Hodosi</b>	<b>Dr. Adalbert Reich</b>
<b>Dr. Hofmann</b>	<b>Dr. Ella Reich</b>
<b>Dr. Iosif Iritz</b>	<b>Dr. Wolf Reznic</b>
<b>Dr. Jack Jäger</b>	<b>Dr. Eugen Róna</b>
<b>Dr. Nicolae Jeremiás</b>	<b>Dr. Zoltán Rosenberg</b>
<b>Dr. Adalbert Kállai</b>	<b>Dr. Alexandru Rosenfeld</b>
<b>Dr. Carol Kállai</b>	

**Dr. Iván Rosenfeld**  
**Dr. Josif Rosenthal**  
**Dr. Izsó Salamon**  
**Dr. Sámson**  
**Dr. Erica Schaffer**  
**Dr. Rubin Schaffer**  
**Dr. Maria Schellenberg**  
**Dr. Ármin Schillinger**  
**Dr. Gheorghe Schlosser**  
**Dr. Agneta Schönfeld (Sugár)**  
**Dr. Carol Schwartz**  
**Dr. Irina Schwartzmann**  
**Dr. Ernest Simon**  
**Dr. Iosif Singer**  
**Dr. Eugen Steiner**  
**Dr. Sidonia Steiner (Krausz)**  
**Dr. Ladislau Székely**  
**Dr. Magda Soreanu Szigeti**  
**Dr. Ladislau Szücs**  
**Dr. Iolanda Téthi**

**Dr. Pavel Téthi**  
**Dr. Ernest Thau**  
**Dr. Desideriu Török (converted)**  
**Dr. Iosif Ujhelyi**  
**Dr. Toma Ujhelyi**  
**Dr. Carol Váradi**  
**Dr. Coloman Varga**  
**Dr. Eugen Waldmann**  
**Dr. Anny Weisz Biksz**  
**Dr. Iosif Weisz**  
**Dr. Pavel Weisz**  
**Dr. Ștefan Weisz**  
**Dr. Weiszblatt**  
**Dr. Emeric Wiener**  
**Dr. Adalbert Wiesel**  
**Dr. Șarlota Wiesel**  
**Dr. Adalbert Windholz**  
**Dr. Iuliu Wolfner**  
**Dr. Iosif Zicher**

**Other practitioners in the Arad County:**

**Dr. Andrei Jeremiás (Șag)**  
**Dr. Petru Kállai (Chișineu-Criș)**  
**Dr. Messinger (Nădlac)**  
**Dr. Alexandru Posner (Semlac)**  
**Dr. Gheorghe Hirsch (Vânători)**  
**Dr. Toma Ujhelyi (Peregul Mare & Pecica)**  
**Dr. Iosif Rath (Zimandul Nou)**  
**Dr. Erwin Wilhelm (Zimandul Nou)**

**The roster of the individuals in the legal profession in Arad and Arad County; those who were active between the two World Wars, and after the Second World War.**

**After the Second World War the following were appointed as judges:**

**Maxim Gorneanu**  
**Liviu Halmos**

**Andrei Popper**  
**Ladislau Samuel**

**The roster of the lawyers in Arad:**

<b>Francisc Deutsch</b>	<b>Ladislau Nagy</b>
<b>Loránt Deutsch</b>	<b>Maxim Neumann</b>
<b>Mihai Deutsch</b>	<b>Iuliu Örfi</b>
<b>Jakab Dénes</b>	<b>Alexandru Rác</b>
<b>Adalbert Éles</b>	<b>Iván Radó</b>
<b>Alexandru Farkas</b>	<b>Francisc Reisinger</b>
<b>Adrian Feiner</b>	<b>Maximilian Rosenfeld</b>
<b>Samuel Fényes</b>	<b>Elemér Rosinger</b>
<b>Eugen Fischer</b>	<b>Frideric Roth</b>
<b>Adalbert Fuchs</b>	<b>Ladislau Sajovits</b>
<b>Eugen Gabos</b>	<b>Ignăție Salomon</b>
<b>Ármin Gara Grosz</b>	<b>Maximilian Salgó Schatteles</b>
<b>Alexandru Gerő</b>	<b>Eugen Singer</b>
<b>Adalbert Goldzieher</b>	<b>Ludovic Singer</b>
<b>Alfred Grossman</b>	<b>Ármin Somló</b>
<b>Maximilian Györi Rapstern</b>	<b>Avram Spéter</b>
<b>Ossias Haimovici</b>	<b>Josif Steiner</b>
<b>Velimir Halász</b>	<b>Pavel Steinitzer</b>
<b>Ladislau Hátori</b>	<b>Bernát Sternheim</b>
<b>Samuel Hirsch</b>	<b>Albert Scheiner</b>
<b>Ludovic Hoffman</b>	<b>Eugen Sugár Schütz</b>
<b>Isidor Hollos Weisz</b>	<b>Heinrich Schütz</b>
<b>Adalbert Höflich</b>	<b>William Szalai</b>
<b>Géza Juhász Iritz</b>	<b>Ladislau Szamek</b>
<b>Ioan Kalmár</b>	<b>Hugó Szegő</b>
<b>Iuliu Katz</b>	<b>Aladár Székely Sonnenfeld</b>
<b>Gavriel Kelemen</b>	<b>Francisc Iosif Székely</b>
<b>Josif Kell</b>	<b>Ludovic Székely Friedmann</b>
<b>Kelle Kohn Alexandru</b>	<b>Sigismund Szöllösi</b>
<b>Kelle Kohn Iuliu</b>	<b>Andrei Timár</b>
<b>Kilényi Zoltán</b>	<b>Emeric Ungár</b>
<b>Ladislau Köves</b>	<b>Desideriu Valkó</b>
<b>Felix Kornai</b>	<b>Nicolae Várnai</b>
<b>László Leopold</b>	<b>Ladislau Vörös</b>
<b>Adalbert Lörinczi</b>	<b>Ștefan Vörös</b>
<b>Aladár Mannheim</b>	<b>Eugen Weinberger</b>
<b>Hugó Margittai</b>	<b>Stefan Weininger</b>
<b>Carol Messer</b>	<b>Ludovic Weisz</b>
<b>Eugen Molnár</b>	<b>Ioan Werner</b>
<b>Oszkár Molnár</b>	<b>Gustav Zeiner</b>
<b>Alexandru Nagy</b>	

**The following lawyers were active in the Arad County:**

In the township of Ineu:

**Rudolf Fekete   Nicolae Kiss**  
**Jakab Kollin   Iosif Sebestyén**

In the township of Pâncota:

**Rudolf Rosti   Iosif Weisz**

In the township of Chişineu-Criş:

**Martin Goldzieher**

In the community of Pecica:

**Béla Krausz**

In the community of Gurahonţ:

**Ernest Schiller**

In the community of Buteni:

**Alexandru Popper**

In the community of Hălmagiu:

**Andrei Grosz**

**The Roster of State- Highschool teachers:**

**Amigo Alexandru**  
**Bányász Ana**  
**Berger Margareta**  
**Berlatzki Ganz Simona**  
**Blum Alexandru**  
**Brettler Ludovic**  
**Drumer Elena**  
**Eckstein Veronica**  
**Einhorn Josif**  
**Einhorn Menczer Eva**  
**Eisinger Schärfer Ana**  
**Fălticeneanu Rita**  
**Földes Klara**  
**Fried Erwin**  
**Glück Eugen**  
**Guttmann Klara**  
**Iercan Adriana**  
**Kahan Emil**  
**Katz Berta**

**Katz Sigismund**  
**Laza Messer Éva**  
**Luger Edith**  
**Mandel Viorica**  
**Nacht Haimovici Libertina**  
**Nacht Martin**  
**Nagy Weisz Suzana**  
**Neuländer Agneta**  
**Radó Bernstein Agneta**  
**Róna Gheorghe**  
**Róna Valentina**  
**Rosenthal Mayer Éva**  
**Rotschild Bartolomeu**  
**Dr. Schönfeld Nicolae**  
**Schreiber Iván**  
**Stern Ági Octavia**  
**Toma Elza**  
**Wilhelm Szerdahelyi Berta**  
**Wolloch Lea**

**The roster of some merchants in the center of Arad**

Between the Eminescu street and the Avram Iancu Plaza:

<b>Ney Fischer</b>	- glassware and china
<b>József (Cultura)</b>	- bookstore, office supplies
<b>Brenner</b>	- textiles
<b>Max &amp; Molnár</b>	- bookstore, office supplies
<b>Mihai Vaida</b>	- textiles (ladies)
<b>Oscar Szigeti</b>	- footwear
<b>Ladislau Fodor (Sanitex)</b>	- medical instruments
<b>Otto Hoffmann</b>	- delicatessen
<b>Sachs</b>	- pub
<b>Lebovits</b>	- textiles (ladies)
<b>Roth</b>	- vegetables, fruits
<b>Arnold Weisz</b>	- pharmacy
<b>Rosenfeld (Corvinul)</b>	- restaurant
<b>Káin</b>	- pharmacy
<b>Zimmermann</b>	- leather wares
<b>Grosz &amp; Róna</b>	- haberdashery
<b>Gartner</b>	- jewelry, watches
<b>Alexandru Hammer</b>	- bicycles
<b>Wurzel</b>	- hats, headgear
<b>Reich</b>	- bazaar (in the Theater building)
<b>Komlos, Muzsai</b>	- male clothing
<b>Schwartz &amp; Szenes</b>	- confections
<b>Kun</b>	- jewelry

Between the Eminescu Street and the City Hall:

<b>Kell &amp; Krausz</b>	- haberdashery
<b>Goldstein</b>	- textiles (ladies)
<b>Francisc Oláh</b>	- books, library
<b>Zeiner</b>	- toiletries
<b>Lustig &amp; Berger</b>	- tricotages
<b>Hartmann</b>	- jewelry
<b>Goldmann (Chic)</b>	- male fashion
<b>Desideriu Künstler</b>	- travel agency
<b>Juliu Hegedüs</b>	- toys, musical records
<b>Nicolae Szabó, Schwartz</b>	- glassware, china
<b>Tiberiu Leipnicker</b>	- toiletries

<b>André Székely</b>	- photographic atelier
<b>Izsó Kerpel</b>	- paperware, books, library
<b>Schwartz (Atlantic)</b>	- coffee
<b>Carol Kabos (Renaissance)</b>	- cloth (ladies)
<b>Toma Hammer</b>	- writing pens, eyeglass frames
<b>Paszternák</b>	- haberdashery
<b>Rényi</b>	- pharmacy
<b>Herman Wiesel</b>	- textiles (male)
<b>Sándor</b>	- office supplies, books
<b>Szatmáry</b>	- confectionery
<b>Gheorghe Lányi</b>	- medical instruments
<b>Iuliu Lefkovits</b>	- printing
<b>Ioan Krausz</b>	- radio
<b>Scheer, Leipnicker (Dacia)</b>	- coffeehouse
<b>Acație Eichner</b>	- textiles
<b>Mor Berger</b>	- textiles
<b>Hacker</b>	- ropes
<b>Márton Weisz</b>	- paints
<b>Max</b>	- tricotages
<b>Halász &amp; Färber</b>	- delicatessen
<b>Rosenstein</b>	- groceries
<b>Vértes</b>	- radio
<b>Alexandru Domán</b>	- carpets

In the Eminescu Street:

<b>Márton Kornis</b>	- the White Cross Hotel
<b>Márton Kornis</b>	- movie theater (Corso)
<b>Andor Somogyi</b>	- handicrafts
<b>Rudolf Berg</b>	- confectionery, pastries
<b>Ioan Überall</b>	- pharmacy
<b>Ákos Löcs</b>	- delicatessen
<b>Földes Béla</b>	- pharmacy
<b>Kalmár</b>	- lightning, lamps
<b>Balázs, Gárdos</b>	- writing pens
<b>Háasz</b>	- real estate agency
<b>Mairowitz</b>	- furrier

**In the Brătianu Street:**

<b>Dick</b>	- watches
<b>Weisz</b>	- cloth, textiles
<b>Éles</b>	- delicatessen
<b>Szekfü</b>	- writing pens, typewriters
<b>Gheorghe Hoffmann</b>	- jewelry

**In the Meşianu Street, the Cathedral Plaza and the area:**

<b>Krámer Alexandru</b>	- bazaar
<b>Markovits</b>	- leather wares
<b>Salamon</b>	- footwear
<b>Salamon</b>	- handbags
<b>Dukász</b>	- jewelry
<b>Schwartzenberg</b>	- bakery
<b>Waldmann</b>	- watches

**In the Goldis Street:**

<b>Huppert</b>	- tailoring for men
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**North of the City Hall:**

<b>Veres</b>	- bicycles
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## Other Merchants and tradesmen:

<b>A.B.C. - Stern</b>	Textile	<b>Károly Garai</b>	Furniture
<b>Vera Gutmann</b>	Perfumes	<b>Garay</b>	Shoestore
<b>Imre Meer</b>	Paints & floor mats	<b>Weisz</b>	Seltzer water
<b>Menczer</b>	Confection	<b>Flesch</b>	Radios
<b>A. Löwinger</b>	Hosiery	<b>Friedrich Leopold</b>	Wines Whole
<b>Melchior Iványi</b>	Footwear	<b>Simon Bak</b>	Hats
<b>Ludovic Goldstein</b>	Haberdashery	<b>Löbl</b>	Paperwares
<b>Eugen Israel</b>	Toiletries	<b>Izsák</b>	Plumbing
<b>Ignat'ie Popper</b>	Bazaar	<b>Neuländer</b>	Provision
<b>Simon Klein</b>	Jewelry	<b>Kohn</b>	Provision
<b>Gárdonyi</b>	Optician	<b>Zoltán Holló</b>	Plumbing
<b>Juliu Sgál</b>	Jewelry	<b>Steiner</b>	Provisions
<b>Meisl &amp; Adler</b>	Male fashion	<b>Heinrich Hoffman</b>	Straps
<b>Juliu Ábel</b>	Lumberyard	<b>Herman Dratler</b>	Textile
<b>Andrei Bornstein</b>	Lumberyard	<b>Anci Schön</b>	Millinery
<b>Samuel Havas</b>	Leather wares	<b>Mici Weisner</b>	Millinery
<b>Andrei Veres</b>	Electrical appliances	<b>Stern</b>	Ropes
<b>Klein Géza</b>	Instruments	<b>Elisabeta Katz</b>	Millinery
<b>Koch Nicolae</b>	Butcher	<b>Reich Béla</b>	Businessman/bookeeper
<b>Pollák Brothers</b>	Jewelry	<b>Roth Aladár</b>	Glass shop
<b>Lefkovits</b>	Textile	<b>Winternitz</b>	Clothing
<b>Simon</b>	Lumber& Coal Dep.	<b>Mihály</b>	Jewelry
<b>Birnfeld</b>	Hardware	<b>Braun</b>	Printer
<b>Hammer</b>	Bicycle	<b>Breuer</b>	Hardware
<b>Moskovics</b>	Mens & Boys Suits	<b>Schillinger</b>	Urania Cinema
<b>Wexler</b>	Tinsmith	<b>Berger</b>	Drink Bar
<b>Aszodi</b>	Dental Technition	<b>Márkus</b>	Grocery
<b>Hollos</b>	Iron Works	<b>Lutwák</b>	Tropical fruits
<b>König &amp; Lázár</b>	Transporters	<b>Gartner</b>	Iron Works
<b>Popper</b>	Hosiery	<b>Epstein Simon</b>	Wine & Spirt
<b>Krausz</b>	Textile	<b>Walder Zoltán</b>	Men's tailor
<b>Vizsnicai</b>	Grocery	<b>Slamovits</b>	Fish dealer
<b>Bergmann</b>	Grocery/Pub	<b>Zinner</b>	Watches sale & Rep.
<b>Royal</b>	Candy Store	<b>Weisz</b>	Milk Bar
<b>Löbel</b>	News Papers	<b>Mittelmann</b>	Shoe repair
<b>Havas</b>	Leather / Shoe repair	<b>Roth</b>	Vegetable Wholesale
<b>Iritz</b>	Paints & Colorants	<b>Korányi</b>	Cooked / Delicatessen
<b>Lia</b>	Backery	<b>Hoffmann H</b>	Express Dry Clean
<b>Meirowitz</b>	Grocery	<b>Heisler</b>	Sausages & Butchery
<b>Winkler</b>	Ladies Hair Dresser	<b>Damjanich</b>	Backery
<b>Székely</b>	Mens Tailor	<b>Zöldi</b>	Grocery
<b>Klein</b>	Ladies Hat Manuf.	<b>Pollák</b>	Jewelry
<b>Elefánt</b>	Drift Wood deposit.	<b>Erdős</b>	Mens Tailor
<b>Löwy</b>	Jewelry	<b>Márkus</b>	Dental Technician
<b>Róna</b>	Button shop	<b>Klausner</b>	Soda water factory
<b>Temmmer Alexander</b>	Leather deposit	<b>Frish</b>	Men's Tailor
<b>Weisz</b>	Radio Factory	<b>Weisz .J.</b>	Textile / Fabrics
<b>Zinger</b>	Central Hotel	<b>Klausner</b>	Drink bar / Pub
<b>Rozenzweig</b>	Furrier	<b>Fülöp</b>	Hats for uniforms
<b>Neuländer</b>	Furrie	<b>Menczer</b>	Leather Goods / Umbr.
<b>Stern</b>	Soda water factory	<b>Nissel</b>	Silversmith
<b>Faber</b>	Paints & Colorants	<b>Reusz</b>	Ice Factory
<b>Markovics</b>	Transporter / Movers	<b>Meirowitz</b>	Delicatessen
<b>Weisz J.</b>	Soda water factory	<b>Popper, Popper &amp; Leichtmann</b>	Textil
<b>Braun</b>	Public Bath	<b>Ádám</b>	Urns & Accessories
<b>Schilinger</b>	Iron factory	<b>Epstein</b>	Horse dealer
<b>Hacker</b>	Wine whole sale.	<b>Salamon Miksa</b>	Grocery
<b>Ştefan Domán</b>	Carpet-rug	<b>Reich Irén</b>	Children fashion designer
<b>Vig Aladár</b>		<b>Kornis Zsigmond (Kornish brothers)</b>	
<b>Jakabovics Zoltán</b>	Chocolate Factory		Wholesale of building materials

ARAD, CITY IN TRANSYLVANIA, WESTERN RUMANIA; UNTIL 1918 WITHIN THE BORDERS OF HUNGARY. JEWS ARE FIRST RECORDED THERE IN 1717. REGULATIONS FOR THE BURIAL SOCIETY WERE DRAWN UP IN 1750. JEWISH OCCUPATIONS DURING THIS EARLY PERIOD WERE MAINLY CONNECTED WITH ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND THE GRAIN TRADE. THE SMALL COMMUNITY BECAME IMPORTANT AFTER 1789 WITH THE ELECTION AS RABBI OF AARON CHORIN, WHO OFFICIATED UNTIL HIS DEATH IN 1844. UNDER HIS LEADERSHIP, ARAD BECAME A CENTER OF THE NASCENT REFORM MOVEMENT IN JUDAISM. HE INITIATED THE CONSTRUCTION OF A SYNAGOGUE IN 1828, ESTABLISHED A SMALL YESHIVAH, AND SET UP AN ELEMENTARY SCHOOL. HE ALSO ENCOURAGED JEWISH YOUTH TO ENTER PRODUCTIVE OCCUPATIONS. DUE TO HIS EFFORTS, THERE WERE ABOUT 100 HIGHLY SKILLED JEWISH ARTISANS IN ARAD IN 1841. EVEN AFTER CHORIN'S DEATH, THE COMMUNITY IN ARAD LONG REMAINED A BASTION OF EXTREME REFORM. AT THE END OF WORLD WAR I, HOWEVER, A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF ORTHODOX JEWS SETTLED THERE, AND ESTABLISHED A COMMUNITY. THE RABBIS IN ARAD WERE EARLY SUPPORTERS OF MAGYARIZATION AMONG THE JEWS; ALREADY IN 1845 R. JACOB STEINHART DELIVERED A SERMON IN HUNGARIAN. THE ZIONIST MOVEMENT FOUND SUPPORT IN ARAD, AND THE "JEWISH PARTY" ALSO OBTAINED MANY VOTES IN THE ELECTIONS FOR THE RUMANIAN PARLIAMENT.

ARAD JEWS SHARED THE FATE OF THE JEWRY OF RUMANIA BETWEEN

אנציקלופדיה יודאיקה • 16 כרכים • עולם היהדות בהישג ידך • בית הוצאה כתר. גבעת שאול ירושלים  
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THE TWO WORLD WARS, SUFFERING FROM INCREASING ANTI-SEMITISM. THE COMMUNITY HOWEVER SURVIVED WORLD WAR II. THE JEWISH POPULATION NUMBERED 812 IN 1839; 4,795 IN 1891; 6,430 IN 1920; 7,835 IN 1941; AND 9,402 IN 1942 (THIS LAST INCREASE WAS DUE TO THE ENFORCED CONCENTRATION IN ARAD OF JEWS FROM THE VILLAGES AND COUNTRY TOWNS OF THE AREA BY THE RUMANIAN FASCIST AUTHORITIES IN 1941-42). THEY NUMBERED 13,200 IN 1947. SUBSEQUENTLY, THERE WAS A PROGRESSIVE DECREASE DUE TO EMIGRATION FROM THE COUNTRY, MAINLY TO ISRAEL. IN 1969 THE JEWISH POPULATION NUMBERED 4,000.

AGVOLGYI, IN: MULT ES JOVO (HUNG., 1917), 296-305; PK

אנציקלופדיה יודאיקה • 16 כרכים • עולם היהדות בהישג ידך • בית הוצאה כתר. גבעת שאול ירושלים  
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על שם נחום גולדמן

The Nahum Goldmann

Museum of the Jewish Diaspora

ח' אלול תשמ"ד

05-SEP-84

ARAD

....

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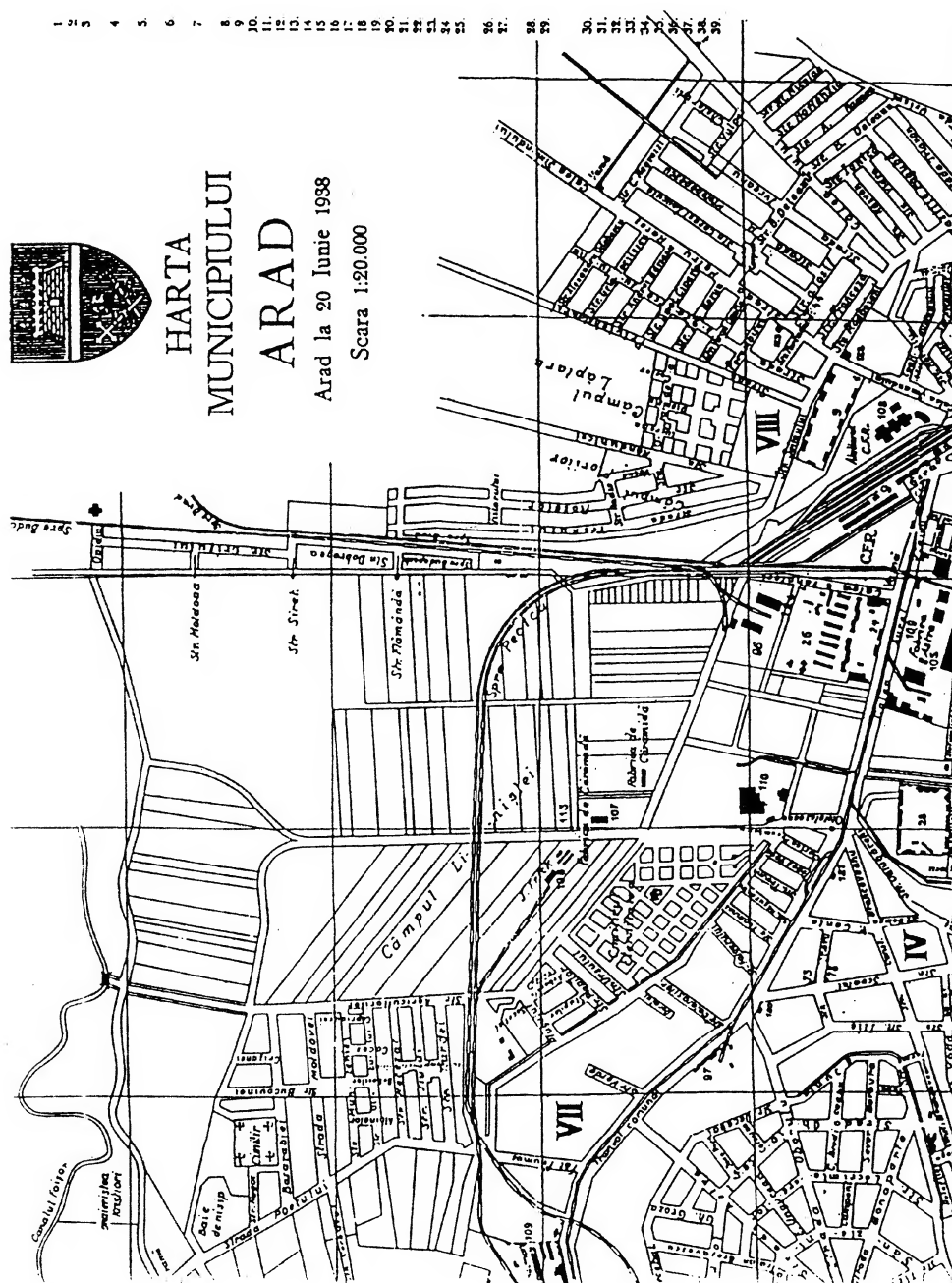
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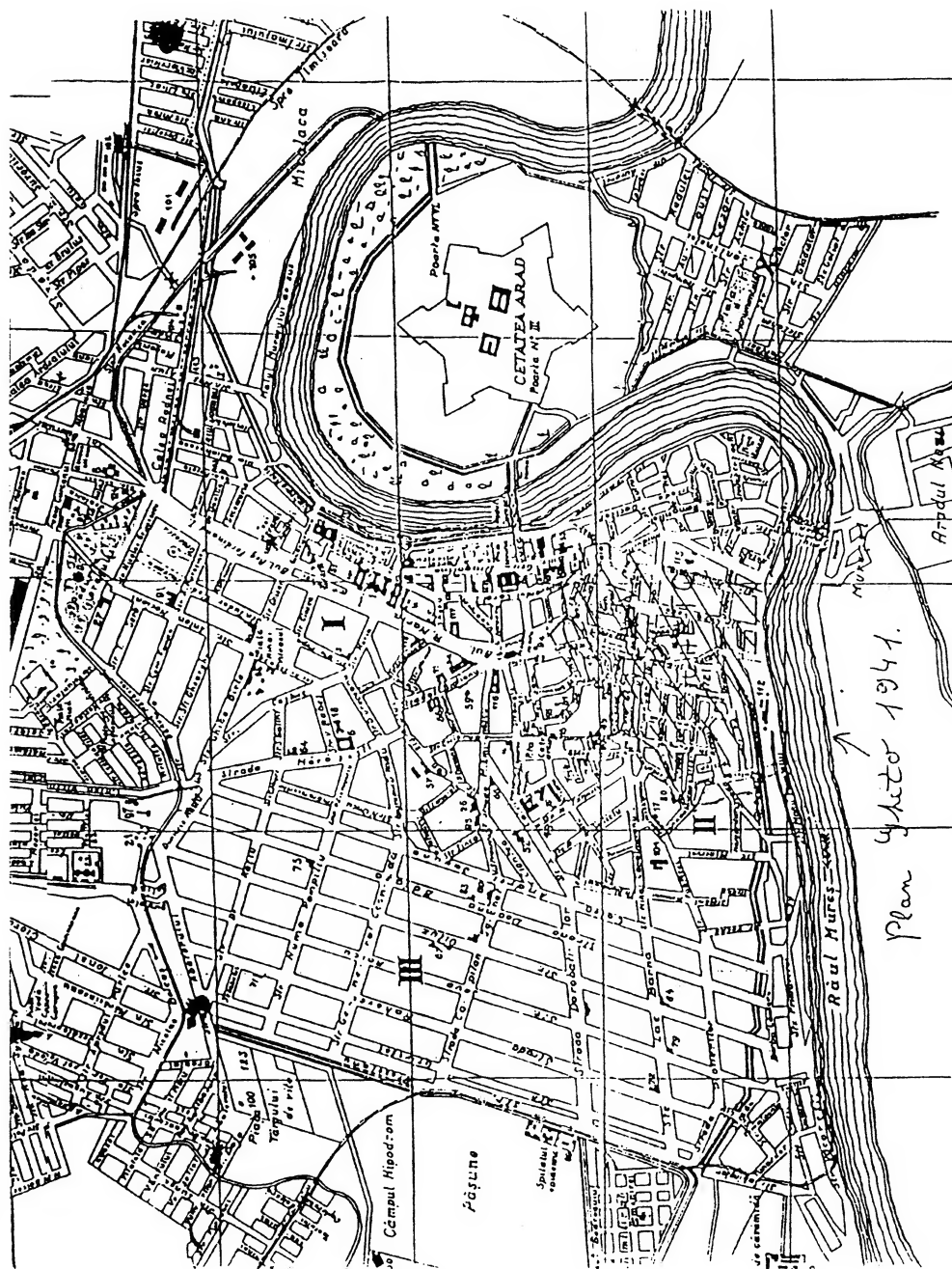
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A copy of the protection letter, signed by the Austrian commander Cosa, whereby he authorizes the settling of the first 2 Jewish families in Arad, in 1717





A copy of the map of the city of Arad, from the archives of the Arad County Offices.  
The striated area represents the territory proposed to the Department of Interior, for setting up  
the ghetto in 1941



*Copie după harta Aradului existentă în Arhivele Prefecturii Arad. Partea hașurată reprezintă zona propusă în 1941 Ministerului de Interne pentru instalarea unui ghetou*

1926. július 30. kedd.

ERDELYI HÍRLAP

## Impozáns keretek között, az összes felekezetek részvételével ünnepelte meg Arad zsidósága templomának százéves jubileumát.

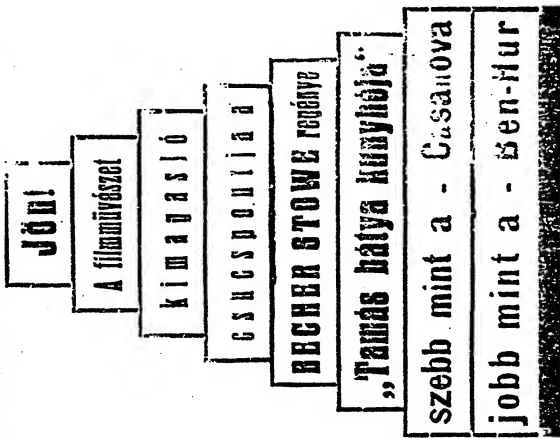
A katonaság és a város is képviseltette magát az ünnepl. istenisztelen. — Súlyok és Frint püspökök és a Minorita-rend részvettek a ünnepségen. — Comsa püspök az ujaradi alapkötelel miatt kimerítette magát.

### A nagyszabású ünnepség részletei.

Arad, július 18. Nevezetesen és a zsidóság életében jelentős esemény folyt le vasárnap Aradon. Az izraelita hitközség és a zsidó társadalom tányes ünnepek keretében ünnepelte meg a zsinagóga százéves fennállását. Hetek óta folyt az előkészület, hogy ezt a napot mind impozánsabbá és melegebbé tegyék, mert a centenáriumi egyben dokumentumak is szánják annak bizonyítására, hogy Aradon nem frázis a felekezeti béke, ezt a várost nem mérgezhette meg az emberi gyűlölet, itt minden vallásfelekezet öröme és a másik ünnepének. A hitközség a templom

### Két püspök, a polgármester, polgári és katonai előkelőségek a templomban.

Az előző padosorokat a városi előkelőségek részére tartották fenn és egymásután érkeztek dr. Angel István polgármester, dr. Parecz Béla, dr. Prohászka László, Boross Iván a katonikus egyházak képviselői, dr. Wild Endre és Peska Lőrinc papok a minorita rend részéről, dr. Barabás Béla a Magyar Párt elnöke, Filotó Zsolt rendőrkapitány, Vulpe József szolgálati főnök a prefektúra kiadóját, dr. Marcus Mihály elnök, Pacurar Brutus főbíró és dr. Falus Lajos főbíró az Ipartestület részéről, Jovanescu



kü harcosa volt: Gioram Aron, az aradi hírvéradó tudós főbíró és Ilrsoal Mózes, akkori hitközségi elnök. Az ő fíradhatatlan munkájuk eredménye volt, hogy 1828. július 13-án lerakhatták a zsidótemplom és iskola alapkövét. Sok gáncs és támadás érte őket, meg kellett küzdeniük a másvallásúak, a hatóságok és az ortodoxia ellenzérével, de ez nem csüggesztette őket, a templom és az iskola mégis felépült, a kultúra és a vallás hajlékát kapott. Kegyeleltel emlékezik meg az előzőkről, köszöni a régi szellemi, amely még ma is állítja a ködű utódokat. A mai generációnak is nagy felelőssége van: új templomot kell építeni, mert a mostani már szűk, nem tudja befogadni a zsidó tömeget. A jelen viszonyok között ez lehetetlen, azonban a gondolatot ápolni kell, hogy a jövő évszázadban megünnepelhessek az új zsidótemplom centenáriumát.

dr. Cornélius Waller, a kitűnő karmester vezényelte alatt.

Ezútan következett a főrabbi háromnégyedórás szentbeszéde, ami után az ének-kar Lewandowszky Hallelujáját adta elő, majd a főábrát és a főrabbi imája beáratja diszintenzitizetletet

### Diszközgyűlés a fiúiskolában.

D. u. 1 órakor az izr. fiúiskola dísztermében diszközgyűlés volt, amelyet dr. Schütz Henrik elnök nyitott meg. A jegyzőkönyvet Vajda József főjegyző vezette, míg annak nyitását és József Jellinek József és Schreyer Viktort kérték fel. Az elnök bejelentette, hogy erre az alkalomra 171 ünnepi beszédét betegsége való letiltással nem mondhatja el, hanem azt helyettesítendő Schütz Henrik elnök olvassa fel. Az előkelő tónusú és tartalmas történelmi visszapihlamlás foglalkozott a zsinatgóra keletkezésével, azaz az idővel, amikor négy évvel ezelőtt a francia forradalom után a zsidóság kezdett érvényesni és mindinkább erősebbé válni az óhaj: ki a gőgötől. A zsidóság polgári ártudatra ébredt és ennek a nagy mozgalomnak két felelőseket emle.

### Gyermekabará

Délután a Közponi-szülőde éjtemében (télterületen) névös mulatság volt, amelynek keretében Arad város zsidó társadalmának képviselői meg a centennáriumi Zsoltólásig megélt a két haladás helyiség előkelő és diszközgyűlési közönséggel, amely mindvégig kellemesen szórakozott. A mulatság fénypontja a bűjös gyermekabará volt, amelyben az izraelita fiú és leányiskola növendékei szerepeltek.

A prófétát, melyet Szánló Szabóna írt, Goldmann Panni mondotta el kedvesen. A «Nagyvárosi könyv»-t Kardos Edith, Grünberger Emma, Meszlányi Manya és Gartner Elza adták elő szép siker mellett. A táncgyűlésben a román táncot Messer M., a rózsádnót Szalay Giti, Drechsler Vera, Sándor Emma, Mayfender Bella, Kesztegybaum

és Sándor Árnagyok az I. kovácsadosztálytól, Miflucsa Árnagy, téparancsnok, Frint Lajos az evangélikus egyházaralatt püspöke, majd társban jut el. Knecht Lajos, Fiedler Anna presbitériumi tagok kíséretében, majd megérkezett dr. Sulyó István, az Aradon időző református püspök, dr. Szemethy Béla egyházközségi titkár, Csécsy Imre református lelkész, Leótes Béla, Berecz Gábor, Kalman László, Mészáros Dániel, Dömötör Bertalan és Dömötör László presbiterekkel, Talmay Endre a szerb egyház titkárdóte, dr. Schütz Henrik bírókészt elnök, Deutsch András, Adler Andor és dr. Keppich Jakab előkelőségi tagokkal, Wieser Jenő az ortodox hitközségi elnök, továbbá a vidéki több rabbi és hitközségi vezető, eljött a képviselőtestület és a Chovra választmánya teljes számban, sponkivül sokan, a társadalom reprezentáns személyek közül, köztük a nevezett különben egy német. A görög keleti egyház kivételesen nem képviseltette magát, miután az ismételtel egyidejűleg templomszentelés volt. Ugyanakkor, dr. Comsa György püspök azonban meglehetősen elmaradt a hitközségekben, amelyben a görög keleti egyház képviselőit tolmácsolta.

Az érkezőket is robusztus megöltötte a hitközségnek. A különböző meggyesületek képviselőinek az első sorban tartották fenn helyet. A Polgári Jótékony Nőgyűlés részéről eljött özvegy Wittauschek Lajosné, Mészáros Dánielné, a Református Nőgyűlés Leótes Béla, Bechaliz Aborné és Farkas Károlyné, a Lutheránus Nőgyűlés Deutsch Sándorné és özvegy Koronné, míg az Izraelita Nőgyűlés Antal Zsigmondné, dr. Stauber Andor és Marx Mártonné képviselőket.

### A diszintenzitizetlet.

Negyed tizenkettőkor kezdődött a diszintenzitizetlet orgona előjátékai. Karetzky Emma orgonaművész négyezer készséggel játszotta Hószly egy szép kompozícióját. Ezután Weisz Sándor főábrát a «Mánuv»-t és az «En Komaucho»-t szólított énekelte a templomi énekkar kísérete mellett. A könyi-

A nagy tejszettel fogadott beszéd után Deutsch Andor emelkedett szólásra, megköszöntve az elnök kelkes beszédét, majd felhívta a közgyűlést és Arad egész zsidóságát, hogy a hitközségi fejlesztesse és vigye be a családéletbe is. A gyermekeket apaink nyomdokolatán kell vezetni – mondotta a szónok – rajtuk áll, hogy erőssé és szilárdá legyenek a zsidó élet. Az iskolát ki kell bővíteni három osztállyal, most ez a legfontosabb munka és ha szívvel, lélekkel és anyagi erővel is támogatjuk a szép gondolatokat, akkor megessz az új templom és a kibővített iskola is. Ennek a gyönyörű ünnepnek az emléke adjon új erőt a további munkához. Üdvözlí az elnököt, a közgyűlést és a hitközségeket.

Nagy ajándék fogadta a beszédet, majd Schütz Henrik elnök javasolta, hogy az összes felekezeti elnökök, hatóságok és intézményeknek, akik a templomban képviseltették magukat, szent a figyelemességért mondjanak köszönetet. A javaslatot elfogadták, majd elhatározta a diszközgyűlés, hogy úgy, az elnök, mint a főrabbi beszédét jegyzőkönyvben megörökíti. Ezzel a gyűlés déli fél kezdte.

### Központban a Központban.

Dorika, a rocosvári Buzogány Márta, Illés Tibi, az angol táncban Fursz Magda, Illés Tibi, egy helyi-szólóban Friedmann Elza, a hollandi táncban Meisl Edith és Olli, a hollandi Friedmann Elza, Putaky Isti, Spitzer Magda, Basch Böske, Hamburger Hertha, táncoltak, akik mind tehetséges kis művésznőknek bizonyultak. Kardos Márta és Steinlel Marti zongoraszámot adtak elő fiatalos lelkességgel. Ezután a mai események pártjelenet következett, melyben Flamm Zsuzsa és Sugár Agi neveztek meg a közönséget, majd Tancos Duci, Löwenstein Böske és Grünfeld Márta a «Frühlingsswalzer»-t táncolták fejelet tudással. Nagyon sok tapsot kapott Szalay Giti sikerült és különösen deccens befejezt. A bohócáncot Tancos Duci fejezte párralán bájjal. Az «Az nevet a leg-

## ARAD ZSIDÓSÁGÁNAK CSODALATOS MEGMENEKÜLESE

Írta: Rössel Mordecháj

hasonló intézkedések nem fogják előbbre vinni a magyarság ügyét. Adott pillanban a zsidóság nem lesz háfátlan segíttel szemben. Még azt is ajánlották, hogy az utazás ürügyét használják fel a tényt, hogy Horthy né családja (a Purgly-család) Aradon él, és a város magyarsága meghívja a kormányzót a bevonulás tiszteletére rendezendő nagy ünnepségre. Argay meghívta erre a beszélgetésre dr. Széllt is. Vállalták a feladatot, és azonnal búcsúztak a Zs.T. vezetőitől, hogy "nekünk, kisebbségi sorban élőknek nemcsak baj idején, de akkor is össze kell tartanunk, ha majd béke lesz".

E beszélgetés után felmentek a városparancsnokhoz, és két órával később közölték a Zs.T.-vel, hogy a városparancsnok megtagadta az utazási engedély kibocsátását.

### Zsidó áldozatok

A magyar csapatok bevonulásának első napjaiban nem voltak zsidóellenes kilengések. Később azonban mind sürűbe lettek a nyílt utcán való verések, olyannyira, hogy a zsidók alig mertek kimenni még a legszükségesebb élelmiszerek bevásárlására is. Ebben a szörnyű légkörben futottak be a hitközséghez zsidók meggyilkolásáról szóló hírek. Az első áldozat Weisz Sándor, a neológ hitközség főkéntora volt, akit a városon kívül lőttek agyon. Utána jött a hír, hogy megtalálták Koch Miklós mészáros megcsontított hulláját. A megöltek névsora rohamosan emelkedett. A következő nap folyamán agyonlőttek Gábor Bandit, Bizám Lászlót, Földes Györgyszerest, Roth Aladárt, valamint Klein Gézát és feleségét.

### A gettó réme

Kedden varrták fel Arad zsidói a

litáit és közölte velük, hogy dr. Széll Lajost kívánja megbízni a főispánsággal. Dr. Széll viszont kijelentette, hogy csak abban az esetben vállalta a tisztséget, ha a román urak hajlandók vele együttműködni. A románok udvariasan visszautasították az ajánlatot. Így azután Széll Lajos nem vállalta a főispánságot.

Közben Blénessy, a katolikus gimnázium tornatanára, megszervezte az intézet növendékeit hazafias munkára: végigjárták az utcákat és átfestették azok román nevét magyarra.

### Közbenjárások, remények és csalódások

A Zs.T. elhatározta, hogy kapcsolatot keres magyar előkelőségekkel, hogy általuk engedékenységre bírja a megszállókat.

Még mielőtt ez az akció megkezdődött volna, felkereste dr. Schönfeld Miklóst, egy volt magyar-párti képviselő, dr. Suchy Pált, és felajánlotta a főbírnak, hogy mindenben rendelkezésére áll. Az ő közvetítésével jött létre az első találkozás Argay püspökkel és Széll dezignált főispánal. A magyar urak keneteljes szavakkal fogadták a zsidók küldöttségét, és megígérték támogatásukat. Fel is keresték a városparancsnokot és kérték, hogy tartsa ki a zsidó rendeleterek alkalmazását, mert Arad város zsidói nem érdemlik meg a megbélyegzést. A városparancsnok megígérte, hogy hajlandó erre, ha az aradi német SS-parancsnok nem sürgeti a dolgot. Így tudódott ki, hogy a magyar katonai parancsnoksággal párhuzamosan SS-parancsnokság is működik a városban. Felmerült a kérdés, ki beszélhet az SS-el. A magyar urak felkérték néhány aradi származású német intellektuelt, interve-

bevonulás napja legyen ünnepe a város minden lakosának vallásra és felekezetre való tekintet nélkül". Vitéz Hessényi altábornagy, a bevonuló csapatok parancsnoka választásban biztosította a püspököt, hogy senkit sem ér bántódás, kivéve, ha azok ország biztonságának érdekei megkívánják azt.

Ez persze félrevezetés volt, mert a bevonulást követő 48 órában megjelent az első zsidó rendelet, amely Arad zsidóságára is kiterjesztette a Magyarországon érvényben lévő zsidótörvényeket.

### A Zsidó Tanács

Egy rendőrfogalmazó megjegyezte a neológ hitközség irodájában, és közölte az utasítást, hogy a hitközség vezetősége jelenjék meg azonnal vitéz Asztalosssy vezéreztetés, városparancsnok irodájában. Az ott tartózkodó mintegy ötven ember hármass bizottságot választott, hogy a zsidóság képviselőiben elmenjenek a városparancsnokhoz. Ennek tagjai: dr. Schönfeld Miklós főbírnak, dr. Gara Armin, a helyi ci-onista szövetség elnöke és dr. Fischer Jenő hitközségi alelnök.

Asztalosssy üdvözlés és bemutatkozás nélkül fogadta őket, és röviden megadta utasításait. "A zsidók – mondta – maguk kell, hogy elkészítsék a sárga csillagot és a következő nap már csak azzal közlekedhetnek." Elmondta a felállítandó gettó tervezetét és közölte, hogy a legkisebb ellenállás, vagy figyelemértés, súlyos retorziókat von maga után. Azt is közölte, hogy 24 órán belül meg kell alakítsák a Zsidó Tanácsot (a továbbiakban: Zs.T.), amely egyetlen képviselője lesz a város zsidóságának.

Azzal, hogy a következő nap reggelén újabb utasításokért tartoznak megjelenni, befejeződött a "kihallgatás".

Viszszatérve Asztalosssytól, a hitkö-

Ötvenegy esztendeje, hogy Horthy katonasága bevonult Aradra. Igaz, mindössze egy hétig tartott a magyar "vitézek" plunkdósi királysága, de ez a néhány nap majdnem sorsdöntő volt a városban maradt mintegy hatezer zsidó szempontjából. Azon a napon, amikor orosz-román csapatok észrevették menekülésre kényszerítették a magyar katonaságot, kellett volna a zsidóknak bevonulni a Várban megszerzett gettóba. Hogy ez nem történt meg, az aradi zsidók a mai napig ismét csodának tekintik.

### Hogyan jöttek be a magyarok?

Augusztus utolsó napjaiban már erősen tartotta magát a hír, hogy a román magyar határon feszültség észlelhető. Voltak előrelátó zsidók, akik nem tekintették valószínűnek a szájról-szájra járó hírt, hogy a magyarok be akarnak vonulni Aradra, és elmenekültek. A helyi ci-onista szervezet is buzdította a zsidókat a város elhagyására, de ugyanakkor a Zsidó Demokrata Bizottság, amely a Kommunista Párt irányítása alatt tevékenykedett, megnyugtató propagandát folytatott és megbélyegezte a "pánikteóriákat". A bizottság kedvéért azonban hozzálátott önvédelmi alakulatok szervezéséhez.

Szeptember 12-én megindult a szervezeten menekülés. A környék falvainak lakossága szekeresen és ionaton indult útnak, szegényes ingóságát magával cipelve. A távozást tartotta helyesnek az a mintegy 5-6 ezer zsidó is, akik Temesvár, Déva, Petrozsin, Soborsin és más kisebb helységek felé vették útjukat. A város zsidó lakosságának több mint a fele Aradon maradt. Egyesek, mert nem volt már idejük a menekülésre, mások pedig, mert hittek abban, hogy ha bejönnek a magyarok, legkisebb gondjuk is

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nagyobb lesz annál, minthogy a zsidókkal foglalkozzanak.

Szeptember 13-án délen a város prefektusa még azt jelenti bukáresi felettséinek, hogy a helyzet nem veszélyes. Ugyanakkor a Nemzeti Bank és más közintézmények teherautókra rakják a mentésre szánt iratokat és gyorsan elrobognak.

A késő délutáni órákban megjelennek az első magyar katonák és tankok, és majdnem minden ellenállás nélkül elfoglalják a várost. Később kiderült, hogy a nyugati határ védelmével megbízott tábornok – egy elrománosodott sváb – elszabotálta a határvédelmet és Plesioanu ezredes, városparancsnok tudatosan nem gondoskodott a város védelméről.

## A bevonulás

A helyi magyarság, különösen a külvárosok népe, kitörő lelkesedéssel fogadta a "felszabadítókat". A magyar értelmiségi rétegek némi tartózkodást tanúsítottak, érezték, hogy ez a katonai kaland nem lehet hosszú életű. Mégis népgyűlést rögtönöztek, amelyen Argay evangélikus püspök tartott üdvözlő beszédet, arra kérte a magyarokat, hogy "a

(folytatás a 19. oldalról)

– Mivé változott a lovagias és jólelkű magyar nép tradicionális jelszava: bor, buza, békesség? A Szent István-keresztény Magyarország nevében védtelen emberek tömegét akarják a halálba kergetni. Hogyan fog a vádlottakat padján ülni a magyarság, ha rövidesen vége lesz a háborúnak? Onnaga vonja felülhet lemosni a sok ártatlan vért.

Vitéz Tóth végighallgatta nyugodtan a szónoklatot és úgy únt, mintha a súlyos szavak elgondolkoztatták volna. Válasza így hangzott:

zség irodájában megválasztották a Tanácsot. Rényi Tibor gyógyszerész, hitközségi elnök kellett volna, hogy a Tanács elnöke legyen, de nem volt hajlandó elvállalni a feladatot azzal az indoklással, hogy a Kommunista Párt rossz szemmel nézi majd és kollaborációnak tekintheti a megbízatás elvállalását. Végül a következők lettek a Tanács tagjai: dr. Schönfeld Miklós, dr. Gara Armin, Huppert Fülöp, Fischer Jenő, Fischer Ákos, dr. Szöllösi Zsigmond, Dr. Rác Sándor, Karácsonyi József, Mahrer Károly, dr. Singer József és Eichner Ákos.

Dr. Schönfeld Miklós főbbi köze vetítette Asztalossy utasításait, kérve, tartózkodjanak minél kevesebbet az utcán, hogy elkerüljék az atrocitásokat. A gettóba vonulással kapcsolatosban ajánlotta – ha megjelenik a végrehajtási utasítás – aki teheti, ne haltsa végre ezt a parancsot, mert a gettózás azonos a halállal.

## Nincs vállalkozó a főispánságra

A városparancsnok magához rendelte a város magyar és román notabli-

– Uraim, lehet, hogy Önöknek igazuk van. Ha módomban állna tenni valamit az érdekében, megtenném. De az utasítások kategorikusak, és én csak azt ígérhetem, hogy igyekszem elkerülni minden embertelenséget és felesleges végzettséget. Én mindössze végrehajtó közeg vagyok.

## A megváltó haladék

A küldöttséget már az is meglepte, hogy az elmondottak után nem tartóztatták le őket. Miután Tóth tényleg jóindulatú ember benyomását keltette, megkérték, halassza el két nappal a lis-

ájának az SS-parancsnoknál. Egy Stampf nevű német bankigazgató és két kórházi főorvos, dr. Krausz és dr. Schmidt el is mentek az SS-ezredeshez. Az SS-tiszt válasza igen érdekes volt: "A németek nem azért tartózkodnak Aradon, hogy a zsidó ügyekbe avatkozzanak. A német parancsnokságot egyáltalán nem érdekli, hogy az aradi zsidók viselkedése sárga csillagot vagy nem, és bekényszerítik őket a gettóba vagy sem. Az ő feladatuk ki- szállítani a környék svábjait a Birodalomba. A zsidókérdés kizárólag a magyar közügyekre tartozik."

Ez világosan bizonyítja, hogy a magyarok aradi tartózkodásuk alatt saját kezdeményezésükből jártak el.

Közben egyre nőtt az elkeseredés a zsidók között. Megrohanák a gyógy-szertraktat és felvásároltak minden elérhető mérget. Úgy tervezték, ha nem tudják elkeltetni a gettóbavonulást, öngyilkosok lesznek.

A Zs.T. ekkor újabb intervenciót tervezett. Megkérték Argay püspököt, utazzon fel Budapestre Horthyhoz, és kérje személyes közbenjárását, mert a helyi hatóságok újján semmi nem érhető el. Kérték, magyarázza meg a kormány-zónak, hogy a háború jelenlegi fázisában

ta benyújtásának határidejét, miután ezekre a napokra esik Ros-Hásáná, a zsidók legnagyobb ünnepe. Hosszas könyörgés után, nemeslelkűségére és józan eszére való apellálásra beleegyezett a haladékba. Megjegyezte még, hogy ezt saját felelősségére teszi, amiért a szabadságával fizethet. Ez valószínűleg is látszott.

Ez a kétnapos halasztás megmen-tette Arad zsidóságát a biztos haláltól. Ros-Hásáná után, azon a napon, amikor be kellett volna nyújtani a "pontos névsort", az orosz csapatok már Arad elővárosában csatároztak. És amikor az első orosz katona betette a lábát

sárga csillagot. Ugyanaznap reggelén Asztalossy berendelte a Zs.T.-t és fél perccel később a városparancsnokhoz utasítások átvitelére. A fél perc alatt Asztalossy elmondta, hogy a gettóba való bevonulásnak 1-2 nap alatt kell megtörténnie. A rendőrpáncsnok humánus ember hírében állt, és miután sok veszteni való már nem volt, dr. Schönfeld Miklós és dr. Gara Armin elhatározták, hogy elmondják a rendőrkapitánynak, ami a szívtűkőn fekszik. Tóth elmondta, hogy 24 órán belül pontos névsort tartoznak benyújtani minden, a városban található zsidóról és 48 órával később megkezdődik a zsidók összpontosítása a Várban. Hozzáfűzte még, hogy ha nem lesz semmilyen rendezettség, igyekszik a legenyhébb módon végrehajtani a gettózást.

Dr. Schönfeld Miklós főbbiből kirobant ekkor a sok keserűség, amely felgyülemlett benne az utóbbi napokban és anélkül, hogy mérlegelte volna szavait, a következőket mondta:

– Mindaz, ami Arad zsidóságával történik és történni készül, Magyarország szígyene és a civilizáció megcsúfolása.

(folytatás a 21. oldalon)

Aradra, a vitéz magyar hadsereg utolsó katonája is kivonult a városból.

Két nappal azelőtt levették a vörös lobogókat és kicserélték azokat a padlásokon tartott piros-fehér-zöld zászlók-kal – most siettek újabb zászlócsere-t végrehajtani.

Akik néhány nappal előtte zokogtak örömkömben, amikor megláták az első magyar honvédet, most jó arcot vágtak a szovjet katona látnán.

Arad zsidósága ajándékba kapta ezen a napon már elvesztettnek vélt életét.

Ezelőtt ötvenegy évvel.

# Intézményeink legszebbike

Százan és százan vannak zsidó testvéreink között, akik még sohasem lépték át a Cheyva Kadisa által fenntartott Szeretetház küszöbét.

Nem ismerik ezt a most frissen renovált Ghica Voda 4—6 szám alatti, egyemeletes, gyönyörű intézményünket, mely bárány *Neuman Alfréd és Stefánia* nevét viseli.

Szeretetházunk tíz 3—7 ágyas szobában több, mint 50 öregnek nyújt békés otthont. Boldogok, akik itt élhetik le hátralévő napjaikat. Szerény, de egészséges, elegendő ellátást, mosást, télen meleg szobát, nyáron árnyas parkban hűsítést, betegség esetén orvosi kezelést, szakzerű gondozást és gyógyszerrel kapnak ápolójaink.

Jelenleg 50 ápoltnak van: 35 nő és 15 férfi. Életkoruk 60—100 év, a legregibb lakónk 16 év óta él Szeretetházunkban. A lakók közül 39 ingyenes, de egyetlen fizetőért sem térítik meg nekünk azt az összeget, amennyibe egy ápolt ellátása kerül.

A Szeretetházat a Gondviselés a szörnyű 5 év alatt is megtartotta saját épületében: az egyedüli intézmény, melyet nem rákolt uccára az akkori idők kegyetlensége. De szükség is volt rá. Az evakuáláskor Aradra beköltözött betegeket a hitközség vezetősége az épület emeleti részében helyezte el. Ezek közül néhányan még ma is ott vannak. A Szeretetházban nyert elhelyezést a bisejáltított, vagy elrekvírt intézmények minden megmenekült holmija, élelmiszere és lakészlete. Utáran bonyolódott le az intézmények, hitközségi alkalmazottak és a szegények laellatása.

Mint hogy a múlt év szeptemberi magyar okkupáció idején a megszálló csapatok által kifosztott kórház azóta nem folytathatja működését, a munkatáborokból visszatérülő beteg munkasszolgálatosokat betegszobáinkban helyeztük el, sokszor 10—12 személyt egyszerre. Jelenleg 6 beteg deportáltat ápolunk, olyanokat, kiknek odahaza senkiük sincsen.

A Szeretetház költségvetése ma már a havi 1,000 000 lejtszerűt túlhaladja. Költségvetési előirányzata a legirrealisabb. — Biztos az az összeg, amelyet a Hitközség fizet az emeleten elhelyezett betegekért és a snóderozások elmaradásáért. A többiről a jó ssten, meg a jó emberek gondoskodnak.

Fontos beveteli forrásunk, a korszort-megváltás, mely, teljes összegében, a Szeretetházé, továbbá a Cheyva Kadiba tagdíjakból és a temetési költségekből fennmaradó összegek.

A több, mint egy millió havi kiadás, az egyre fokozódó ár-emelkedések, a halaszthatatlan téli beszerzések nagy fejlődést okoznak vezetőségünknek, mégis bízunk benne, hogy át fogjuk vészelni a most elkövetkezendő reméljük rövid, nehéz hónapokat és semmiben sem fog nélkülözést szenvedni e gyönyörű intézményünk, melyre oly nagy szüksége van Arad zsidóságának.

A Hitközség és a Cheyva vezetősége mindent el fog követni, hogy ez be ne következzen. Ha másképen nem tudja biztosítani fennmaradását, újból megalkítja a Szeretetház Barátainak Egyesületét, mely a multban is nagyban hozzájárult a Szeretetház zavartalan fenntartásához. En bízom benne, hogy ez sikerülni is fog, mert hiszek a zsidó szívében, mely a jótekonyság kiapadhatatlan forrása.

*Pálfi Ernő,*  
a Szeretetház főgondnoka

## ÁLLAMPAPIROKAT

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## MINIMUM NU UITĂ

EICHMANN ȘI PLANUITA  
DEPORTARE A EVREILOR  
DIN ARAD ȘI TIMIȘOARA

Cu trecerea anilor, ies la iveală date noi în legătură cu dramaticele evenimente din toamna anului 1944 – evenimente hotărâtoare pentru destinul evreilor din sudul Transilvaniei și din Banat.

După ieșirea României din coaliția hitleristă în august 1944, Ungaria s-a găsit într-o situație politico-militară extrem de critică. Între 26 august și 12 septembrie, Horthy a schimbat cel puțin de cinci ori orientarea politică a Ungariei; după zece zile de șovăieli, s-a hotărât să lanseze la 5 septembrie atacul în direcția Turda-Luduș, ofensivă care s-a prăbușit încă la 6 septembrie; după alte zile de nehotărâre și cochetare cu ideea unui armistițiu, aprobă, cel puțin pentru moment, o nouă angajare alături de germani, autorizând la 12 septembrie pe generalul Vörös, șeful Marelui Stat Major, care primise în prealabil asigurări de la Hitler, să ordone celor 3 divizii maghiare concentrate la graniță să pornească la atac în direcția Arad-Timișoara.

Populația Aradului și, în special, comunitatea evreiască, formată din circa 10.000 de suflete, trăia în această perioadă într-o totală nesiguranță, fără a cunoaște, bineînțeles, tot ce se petrecea în culise. Imediat după 23 august 1944, mulți cetățeni, în special evrei, s-au refugiat în interiorul țării; dezarmarea slabelor unități germane și, mai ales, vestea despre iminenta sosire a unor masive unități sovietice care, împreună cu unitățile armatei române, se revărsau în direcția granițelor ungare, a determinat reîntoarcerea majorității refugiaților la Arad. În felul acesta, diviziile maghiare care, în urma unor succese inițiale au ocupat la 13 septembrie, vremelnic, Aradul, au surprins aici aproximativ 70% din evreii arădeni. După ce au ocupat Aradul, una din primele "grij" ale administrației maghiare a fost emiterea unor dispoziții împotriva evreilor, obligându-i între altele să poarte steaua galbenă ca semn distinctiv; nu mai era un secret că peste

## G.H. KOVACS (EICHNER)

citeva zile evreii urmau să fie transportați într-un ghetto, iar pasul următor, ca din toate orașele, cu excepția Budapestei, trebuia să fie deportarea spre lagărul de exterminare de la Auschwitz-Birkenau.

Desfășurarea ulterioară a evenimentelor este cunoscută; trupele horthyste n-au reușit să pătrundă nici în direcția Timișoara, nici în direcția Deva, fiind opriți de eroica rezistență a elevilor școlii militare de la Radna. Scurta ocupație maghiară de cea 9 zile (13-22 sept. 1944) a luat sfârșit prin înfrângerea trupelor horthyste, trupele sovietice și române trecând la sfârșitul lui septembrie pe un front larg granițele Ungariei.

Studierea la Institutul Yad Vashem a protocoalelor interogatoriului luat lui Adolf Eichmann, interogatoriu care a durat timp de peste 9 luni și a rezumatului acestuia, alcătuit de publicistul german Jochen von Long, editat în germană și în engleză, precum și a altor documente, mi-a permis să găsesc date noi, deosebit de relevante, în legătură cu evenimentele de atunci.

Se știe că din martie 1944, Adolf Eichmann împreună cu locotenentii săi și-au stabilit cartierul general la Budapesta, de unde îndruma acțiunile anti-evreiești care au culminat cu deportarea în masă spre Auschwitz-Birkenau. Instalarea la 29 august 1944 a guvernului Lakatos care, cel puțin pentru moment, a suspendat deportarea evreilor care, de altfel, rămăseseră numai la Budapesta, a lăsat pe Eichman și oamenii lui "fără de lucru". În acest moment, Eichman, în fruntea unei unități speciale SS, este trimis în zona Arad-Sinicolaul Marc, zonă în care urmau să pătrundă cele 3 divizii ale armatei maghiare. În fața ofițerului de poliție Less din Haifa, Eichman recunoaște că a ajuns pînă la Aradul Nou, (localitate așezată față în față cu Aradul, pe cealaltă parte a Mureșului). Scopul acestei deplasări ar fi fost, după Eichman, exclusiv evacuarea a

cca 10.000 de etnici germani.

Tot în arhivele Institutului Yad Vashem se află procesul verbal al interogatoriului luat de judecătorul de instrucție al Tribunalului de la Viena la 22 ianuarie 1961 lui Franz Novak, unul din adjuncții lui Eichman. Într-o completare la depoziția sa anterioară, Novak pomenește de trimiterea, în august-septembrie 1944, a unei jumătăți de companie Waffen SS în zona Arad, misiune la care a participat Eichmann, Hunsche, Wislizeni, Danneker și Abramcic (organizatorii nimicirii populației evreiești din Slovacia, Croația, Grecia, Franța etc.).

Este posibil că Eichmann și unitatea sa de călăi au avut și misiunea de a sprijini evacuarea populației germane; este însă extrem de improbabil ca o asemenea unitate de "experți" în problema "soluției finale" a problemei evreiești să nu se răluiească cu populația evreiască din Arad și Timișoara, să nu se ocupe cu concentrarea în ghettouri și apoi deportarea populației evreiești.

Spre norocul nostru, destinul nu le-a hărăzit să-și îndeplinească obiectivul.

P.S. Transmit și pe această cale mulțumirile mele d-lui Dr. Nicolae Schönhofeld, fost șef rabin al comunității evreiești din Arad și cercetătorului Bar-Saket de la Institutul Yad Vashem din Ierusalim pentru ajutorul acordat în vederea găsirii documentelor amintite în material.



*Pictorita Marta Indig - Leopold*



A fost odată, ca miculădată, a fost o dată înaltă, frumoasă ca toate celelalte fetițe, cu părul lung și negru împletit în coștic. Dar, mai ales, pe o marmură de har duimnezește, pe care atunci nu ne-am priceput să-l bleștăm. Peceata harului divin i-a ochiușii todeauna ochii și privrea. Ochiul uman, expresiv, de culoarea opalului mat, ce-i mai verzi din câți am întâlnit, împodobiți cu gene lungi și strălucitoare conturate, pot ogîndi suferință, bucurie și supărare. Ochiul

de complicitate a emoțiilor revederii, a apropiării de pământul meu natal, împănând al pârânilor și al buniciilor mei. Pentru mine ficcare strădu, ficcare copac, reprezintă o caldă amintire. Am pictat apartamentul din Str. Gh. Lazăr nr.6, în fața geamurilor care mă aștepta să revin al tatălui meu, la adă strădu Eminescu, iată Grădicița lângă Cimitirul Evreiesc, unde-mi sunt îngropată strămoșii. Am încercat

...măsurile izvoare dintr-un mare suflet. El a fost obsedat de o dragoste mare și refuzat de o femeie incapabilă să-l înțeleagă. Imi pare rău că - lumea costă - nu înțelege românește, pentru a cuprinde poezile acestora minunile, fără pereche, pentru care nici o traducere nu s-a situat la înălțime.

Celelalte, peisaje reprezintă Franța și Parisul, iar unde trăiesc acum. Aici am primit educația mea europeană, artistică, în acest oraș mic, renumit de cultură, de lumină și spirit. Întotdeauna în Paris mi s-a simțit destul de îndoiat. În gâs cuie de exprimare, în pectur cu ajutorul profesorilor mei, Ferit Can. El a fost pentru mine, la fel ca un părinte ce-și îngrijește fiul în lumca arelor. M-a îndrumat până la ultima suflare, noatrenrăpând în 1986. De fapt, Paris a fost dedicată profesorului lui, a lui dedicată profesorului meu, ca o mulțime pentru creșterea, investiția în mine. Peisajele făcute în jurul Montparnasse, unde este îngropat, și unele copii după mamea, tatălui său, vin ca o recompensă pe faclională postumă. Suferul lui va fi respectat cu mine, cu încercând să-i ofer tot ce îl m-a învâlat.

**A**m pictat și Ierusalimul -  
Ierusalimul de aur - (la vremea aceea  
cotețiorilor nu s-a vădit încă că pentru  
acest tablou, în 1993 va câștiga  
**Medalia de Bronz cu mențiune la**  
**marile concursuri internaționale organi-**  
**zate de l'ACADEMIE INTERNATIONALE DE LUTICE n.a.)**  
pentru Israel, a doua mca patric,  
năprsit dintr-un cântec frumos în  
-braică. L-am făcut luminos, căci  
lumină pentru lumea întreagă vine  
din Ierusalim.

Acest omagiu pentru România, care m-a născut, realizat în maniera cea mai frumoasă dinău posibilitățile

Belmondo la Edouard Mac'Avoy, de la Maurice Esteve la Salvador Dalí, de la Edouard Pignon la Zac Wou-Ki și mulți alții. Catalogul aparține Fundației Salonului de Toamnă.

Annuaire International des Arts Plastiques. Franța 1991 Edition cu Chevalier. Sunt prezentate datele biografice, performanțele și adresa. O sumară deservită de artiști: „Marta Lăzăreanu, este română, trăiește în Franța de 15 ani, este femeie, are în vârstă de 35 ani. Opera ei abundă de delicateți și simfonii, fie că este vorba de pictură, de nădăru, de natură morată, de toate. Are o exaltă o sensibilitate cu o ușoară atitudine cu mâna. Marta Lăzăreanu este o minunată operă de o poezie romantică, cu profunzime în înmestația și spăriturilor sale, cu tonurile diaphane și compunute cerului.”

„ARTS - MAGAZINE, AC-  
TUALITES” nr.33 martie 1993. Și  
aici sunt prezentate datele biografice,  
performanțele, și este caracterizată  
din punct de vedere artistic.


"LIVRE D'OR DES 25 ANS"  
de L'Académie Internationale de  
Lettres, Editura Jean Grassian Paris-  
Carnac. Este caracterizată ca  
apartinând stilului - impresionist. Se  
mai menţionează, citizi: "...Pe de  
altă parte, artista continuă o artă difi-  
cilă, arta de a face portrete". Sunt  
menţionate în continuare toate per-  
sonajele.

Despre pictoriŃa noastră au mai scris nenumărate ziare, din FranŃa și din Israel, pe care nu le voi menŃiona. Importante sunt semnalările din reviste de specialitate artinŃite mai sus.

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PEINTURE

Martha Indig LEOPOLD  
HOMMAGE à LA ROUMANIE

- PARIS - OCTOBER 1948 -



1994. július 10-én kísérték el utolsó útjára **Dr. Schönfeld Miklóst**, a nagy múltú aradi zsidó hitközség egyik lekiemelkedőbb személyiségét, aki rövid szenvedés után örökre itthagyt bennünket.

Schönfeld Miklós Negresti községben, Szatmár-megyében született. Vallásos nevelésben részesült, jesivákban tanult. Később felkerült Pestre, 1937-ben a budapesti Ferenc József Országos Rabbiképző Intézet elvégzése után doktorátust szerzett filozófiából, sémi filológiából és történelemből, egyben rabbiképesítést is kapott. 1939-ben Aradra került és a nagyrabecsült **Dr. Vágvolgyi Lajos** főrabbi mellett segédrabbi tisztséget töltött be. 1941-ben, Dr. Vágvolgyi halála után megválasztották az aradi neológ zsidó hitközség főrabbi-jává.

Aradi pályafutását Tánách és zsidó történelem tanítással kezdte. 1941-ben fő kezdeményezője, alapítója, majd később igazgatója lett az aradi zsidó fiú- és leányliceumoknak. A felszabadulás után is tanított. Emiatt 1953-ban letartóztatták, és három hónapi elzárásra ítélték.

A háború alatt segélyeket juttatott a munkatáborokban dolgozó aradiaknak, élelmet, ruhákat és gyógyszert tartalmazó csomagokat a Transznisztriában lévő deportáltak részére. Segítette az Észak-Erdélyből megszökött, Tordánát érkező menekülteket, a **Rössel Mordecháj** által szervezett szöktetési akciókat. 1944. szeptemberében a magyar megszállás alatt Aradon maradt, biztatta az embereket, hogy a felszabadulás már kö-

## DR. SCHÖNFELD (JÓZSEF) MIKLÓS AL SLOSIMJÁRA

zel. Tárgyalt a magyar térparancsnokkal és sikerült elhagasztania az aradi zsidók listájának átadását, ezáltal elkerülve ezeknek a várban való összegyűjtését és kivégzését. A megszállás utolsó napjaiban az aradi román püspök, **Andrei Magheru** és **Victor** vikárius bujtatták.

A háború befejezése után segítette a munkatáborokból felszabadult menekülteket. Tagja volt az aradi Bné Brit "Or" páholyának. A Zsidó Világkongresszus aradi tagozatának alelnöke volt.

1957-ben megnősült, feleségül vette **Sugár Ágít**. Ebből a házasságból született egyetlen leánya, Amira.

A templomi szószékről gyakran tartott cionista szellemű prédikációkat. 1959-ben ismét letartóztatták, kihallgatása alkalmából bántalmazták

és megkínózták. A hadbíróság két évi kényszermunkára ítélte, ebből egy részt a Dunacsatornánál töltött. 1960. szeptemberében került ismét szabadlábra.

A család 1961-ben alijázott. Eleinte Kirját Motzkinban telepedtek le, itt Ági gyermekorvosi rendelőt nyitott, **Miklóst** a motzkini középiskolában alkalmazták, ahol Tanachot tanított. 1975-ben nyugdíjazták. Ezután Haifára költöztek. Miklós a Haifai Egyetem történelem fakultása keretében a Strohlitz Alapítvány irattári munkáját

irányította. Ezt az intézetet – amely a vézskorszak kutatását tűzte ki céljává – **Vágó Béla** professzor vezette, **Asher Cohen** tanár közreműködésével. Ebben a munkában Amira lánya, – aki ma a Haifai Múzeum művészettörténeti könyvtárában dolgozik –, szintén közreműködött. Felesége, Ági végig lelki támasza volt minden aktivitásában.

A Bné Brit szervezet keretében Miklós Tanach-leckéket adott elő és az ünnepek alkalmából magas színvonalú előadásokon ismertette az ünnep történetét és lényegét.

Elnöke volt előbb a motzkini, később a haifai Kibbuc Gálujot Kauders Ben Cion páholyának.

Mikor a slosim alkalmából körülálljuk Dr. Schönfeld Miklós sírját, tisztelettel és szeretettel gondolunk Reá, megelevenedik előttünk földi pályafutása és könnyes szemünk előtt látjuk kimagasló alakját.

Köszönetünket és hálánkat szeretném kifejezésre juttatni a barátok, a testvéri lánc, a volt tanítványok és az egész aradi zsidóság nevében mindazért, amit Miklós életében ezért a közösségért cselekedett.

Emléke legyen örökké áldott.

**DR. GORDON TAMÁS**

## Joachim Schreiber főrabbi emlékére

Kétszer temetni, tragikusan sajátos zsidó privilégium. Meghalni a gálutban és ott „kever Jisráelhez“ jutni, majd pedig exhumálás és Erec Jisráel földjében való elhantolás.

Schreiber Joachim volt aradi ortodox főrabbi 36 esztendőn keresztül — 1912-től 1948-ig volt hitközsége köztiszteletben álló szellemi vezetője. Halála idején hitközsége majdnem teljes egészében Aradon élt még. Az eltelt közel 30 esztendő alatt azonban Arad városa majdnem „judenrein“-é vált, legtöbbjük — közöttük egész családja — alijjázott. Mélyen sorsszerű, hogy ezekben a napokban, amikor az egykor élettől hemzsegő aradi ortodox templom teljesen elárvult, amikor alig lehet benne egy minjára való öreg embert összehozni, amikor a templom frígyszekrényében lévő Tóra-tekerceket senki sem veszi már ki, mert nincs egyetlen hitközségi tag sem, aki olvasni tudna belőle és a „Hetí szakasz“-t Chumásból olvassák — ezekben a napokban hozták el — a család és hivei — Schreiber Joachim földi maradványait Izráelbe, hogy itt, az Igéret Földjén találja meg végső nyugalját.

Schreiber Joachim nagyformátumu pap volt, aki személyében egyesítette az elmélyült vallásosságot, világi tudást, végtelen szerénységet és melegen érző emberséget. Meggyőződéses hive volt Simson Ráfáel Hirsch „Torá im derech erac“ eszméjének

és ebben a szellemben vezette hitközségét, amely a vészidőszak idején és az azt követő esztendőben Közép-Európa talán legszámtottevőbb zsidó közössége volt. Aradon menekültek a vész idején a lengyel, magyar és szlovák gettók üldözöttei és Arad volt az alijjához vezető út életet biztosító, átmeneti állomása.

A nagy eszmei erjedések és harcok idején, amikor Erdélyben a széthúzás és civakodás szelleme uralkodott ortodox és neológok, cionisták és anticionisták, chászidok és különféle chászid áramlatok között, Aradon viszonylagos béke uralkodott a szemben álló táborok között.

Ez pedig Schreiber Joachim bölcsességének és meggyőző erejének volt köszönhető.

Nem volt hivatalosan cionista, de szerelmese volt Cionnak. Nem egyszer fejezte ki abbeli reményét, hogy boldog volna, ha Erec Jisráelben élhetne gyermekei és hivei körében. A sors, amely életében senki volt tulságosan adakozó ezzel a kiváló emberrel szemben, megvonta tőle az alijja örömeit.

Légyen hamvai hazahozatalának és az ország köveiből készült sírkövevének napja szerény bizonyítéka annak a mélységes szeretetnek, amelyet oly sokan éreztek Joachim Schreiber, a rabbi, a tanítómeister és az ember iránt.

Rössel Mordecháj



